

# Soviet Literature

---

---

## Contents:

- CONSTANTINE SIMONOV — Beneath the Chestnuts  
of Prague, a play . . . . 2  
PETRO VERSHIGORA — People With a Clear Conscience. 27

### BOOKS AND WRITERS

- VLADIMIR ZHDANOV — Mikhail Lermontov . . . . 43  
SOPHIA NELS — Alexander Fadeyev and his  
new novel "The Young Guard" . . . 47  
EVGENI ALMAZOV — On Literary Criticism . . . . 52  
ROMAN SAMARIN — A Soviet History of English  
Literature . . . . . 54  
New Books . . . . . 57

### ARTS

- IVAN LAZAREVSKY — Constantine Yuon . . . . . 62  
YURI GOLOVASHENKO — "Cinderella" . . . . . 65  
ALEXANDER KRAMSKOY — Sofronitsky plays Scriabin. 68

- NEWS AND VIEWS . . . . . 70

2

---

February

1946



---

Address: "Soviet Literature", P. O. Box 527, Moscow

# Soviet Literature

2

---

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PUBLISHING HOUSE  
PRINTED IN THE SOVIET UNION



## BENEATH THE CHESTNUTS OF PRAGUE

(A Play in Four Acts)

### DRAMATIS PERSONAE

FRANTIŠEK PROHAZKA, doctor and scientist, something over 50, not yet old, a few years widowed, portly, handsome, clean-shaven.  
STEFAN, his son, captain in the Czechoslovak Corps, 26 years of age.  
BOŽENA, his daughter, Stefan's twin sister.  
LUDWIG, his younger son, 17 years old.  
JAN GRUBEK, an old university friend of František, of the same age; well-dressed, grey-haired.  
BOGUSLAV TIHY, a well-known poet, a friend and neighbour of the Prohazkas. He is about 45, fat and flabby, carelessly dressed.  
IVAN ALEXEYEVICH PETROV, colonel, commander of a paratroop division, 38 years old, his left eye bandaged.  
GONCHARENKO, Petrov's driver, 30 years old, sergeant-major.  
MASHA, a Russian girl of 21.  
JULI MAČEK, Božena's fiancé, a doctor, owner of a clinic; 35 years old and quite handsome.  
JOKIČ, a Montenegrin, grey-haired, looks about 60. Blind.

Time—May 1945.

Place—Prague.

### ACT ONE

#### SCENE 1

*(The hall of František Prohazka's house on the outskirts of Prague. Three sliding glass doors—back stage leading onto verandah, left into a room, right to the street. Stairs from the hall to upper story. Two armchairs and a small table by the fireplace. A cupboard, a piano, a large divan with a low round table beside it. Several deep modern armchairs and a rocking chair. On shelves along the walls, objects of Czech and Slovak art, ceramics and water-colours of Prague. Dusk.)*

*As the curtain rises, the sound of a motor cycle is heard. On the stage—František and Ludwig, in tense attitudes.)*

FRANTIŠEK (*relieved*): It's not coming here. Jan! Jan! Grubek! It's not coming here!

GRUBEK (*coming out of the cupboard*): There are no quiet spots in the world any more. I've been able to live in peace in your house for only two days.

LUDWIG (*leaning out of the window*): He's gone to Pan Tihy's house. (*Pause.*) It's a Gestapo man. He's kicked open the door. He's going in...

FRANTIŠEK: Are they really going to arrest him for the third time?

GRUBEK: Now if they arrest people, they don't let them go.

*(The sound of a shot.)*

FRANTIŠEK: My God! (*Covers his face with his hands.*) They've killed him, the best of our poets... my God!

*(Ludwig paces the room wildly.)*

LUDWIG: The swine, oh, the dirty sons of bitches!

FRANTIŠEK: Where are you going?

LUDWIG: Out there, I...

FRANTIŠEK (*catching him by the arm*): You're not going anywhere. You're the only one I've got left. The last of three! You're not going! You're not going!

*(The door swings open and Tihy enters. He is in a dressing-gown, and looks confused and wild. He is holding his hands out in front of him.)*

TIHY: Let me wash my hands. Quick! Ludwig! (*Ludwig takes a water-bottle from the table.*) Pour it on my hands!

FRANTIŠEK: But it will wet the carpet.  
TIHY: Never mind. Pour it on. (*Ludwig pours the water over his hands.*) I've killed him. I was writing. He came storming in. I hit him with the inkwell. You know my inkwell?

FRANTIŠEK: Yes, I know it.

TIHY: I hit him. And then he fell. He fired as he fell. Then I hit him again, and killed him. The swine! In '39 six of them came for me, last year it was three, and



today one. I killed him. Killed him and locked the door on him. (*He looks round, walks up to the curtains and wipes his hands on them.*) I'll hide here with you. To the devil with them all! Are you afraid?

FRANTIŠEK: No, I'm not afraid.

TIHY (*looking in Grubek's direction*): And who's that?

GRUBEK: Jan Grubek.

FRANTIŠEK: A friend of my youth. He's been hiding here three days.

TIHY: Like rats.

FRANTIŠEK: What's that?

TIHY: Like rats. Hiding. I'm sick of being like a rat.

GRUBEK: There's blood on your dressing-gown. You should ...

TIHY: Yes. All right. (*Takes off the dressing-gown.*) And where've you escaped from?

GRUBEK: I'm from Moravska Ostrava.

TIHY: But aren't the Russians there yet?

GRUBEK: I ran away when the Germans were still there. I went over everybody I knew and I remembered František. We were different when we were young. We weren't like rats then ... And I thought he'd be the same as he always was.

FRANTIŠEK: And you were right.

GRUBEK: Wait a bit, though. The Germans'll come looking for him, for that one you killed. Probably today ...

LUDWIG: Maybe they won't. They've other things to think about right now. The Russians'll soon be here too. And then today ...

FRANTIŠEK: Well, what about today?

LUDWIG: Nothing.

GRUBEK: But wait, there's the motor cycle ...

TIHY: What motor cycle?

GRUBEK: Standing there at your door, isn't it?

TIHY: Ah, yes, of course. We'll wheel it into the garage. Ludwig!

FRANTIŠEK: Don't get the boy mixed up in it.

TIHY: All right.

LUDWIG (*following him*): No, I'm going to help you.

FRANTIŠEK: I forbid it, Ludwig.

LUDWIG: I'm going to all the same. (*Follows Tihy out.*)

FRANTIŠEK: They all go their own way. Stefan ran off to Russia, and this one never asks me about anything now. And he's my last. You understand what that means—my last! (*Pause.*) Božena's in the camp.

(*Footsteps on the stairs.*)

GRUBEK: Who's that now?

FRANTIŠEK: That's probably Juli, Božena's fiancé. (*Looking at his watch.*) Yes. He always comes on Saturdays at nine, every Saturday, ever since Božena was taken away to the camp. (*A pause.*) A young, beautiful girl, and two years in the camp already. And all for slapping the face of an insolent German in a café.

(*Enter Maček.*)

FRANTIŠEK: Allow me to introduce you, Juli.

MAČEK: Maček.

GRUBEK: Jan Grubek. You see, there's another rat in this house now.

MAČEK: If you are that same Pan Grubek about whom I have heard from Pan Prohazka when he talks about his youth, then I ...

GRUBEK: Yes, I'm that one, or rather, I should say I was that one.

MAČEK: No news of Božena?

FRANTIŠEK: No, none! They don't even permit her to write. What is she like now, Juli? What's been happening to her?

MAČEK (*noticing the pool of water on the carpet*): What's that?

FRANTIŠEK: Oh, that's ... somebody washed his hands here.

MAČEK: But why here?

FRANTIŠEK: It was Tihy. When a Gestapo man came to arrest him, he killed him. He's hiding here with us.

MAČEK: But why here? Why with you? Do you really think you have to ... (*He looks at Grubek.*)

GRUBEK (*catching his glance*): You mean—it's enough that I'm hiding here?

MAČEK: No ... I don't mean that ... though yes, that's really what I do mean. (*To František.*) You're the father of my fiancée, and it's my duty to think about you. And I'm going to, whether you want me to or not.

(*Two women appear in the doorway, Božena and Masha. Both are ragged. Masha's legs are wrapped in rags. She can hardly walk. Paying no attention to anybody, Božena leads her to the rocking chair and helps her sit down.*)

BOŽENA: I'll wash your feet in a minute.

How do you feel?

MASHA: All right.

BOŽENA: You always say "all right." Do they ache much?

MASHA: No, it's all right.

MAČEK (*approaching them*): What's all this? Where do you come from?

BOŽENA: Why, Juli, has even my voice changed so that you don't recognize me? Wait till tomorrow. I'll have had a wash and made myself look a bit more respectable and then maybe you'll recognize me. How are you, Father! (*Passing Maček, she goes up to her father who is standing, stunned. He starts towards her and embraces her.*) All right, all right, that's enough. I'm so glad to see you. (*Sits calmly down in the armchair.*) I'm sorry you didn't recognize me, Juli.

MAČEK (*approaches her and kneels down beside her*): I didn't dare believe it. Božena! Let me kiss your hand, at least.

BOŽENA: Oh, certainly. That one. You know, out there we quite got out of the habit of having our hands kissed. Now this one. That'll do.

MAČEK: I am so happy.

BOŽENA (*after a pause*): Bring a basin of water. I hope you still have hot water running?

FRANTIŠEK: Yes.

BOŽENA: Bring me a basin. I've got to wash this poor girl's feet ... You hear what I say?

(*Exit Maček.*)



FRANTIŠEK: Božena, Božena! (*Goes up to her.*)

BOŽENA: Don't, Father! I don't want to start crying just now. Let me introduce you. This is Masha, a Russian girl. We escaped from the camp together. It's thanks to her that we got away. Come and kiss her hand.

(*František wants to kiss Masha's hand.*)

MASHA (*drawing away her hand*): No, no ...

BOŽENA: Father, kiss her hand. (*To Grubek.*) You're a Czech?

GRUBEK: Yes, I'm a Czech.

BOŽENA: Then kiss her hand if you're a Czech.

GRUBEK: With the greatest of pleasure. (*Approaches Masha and kisses her hand.*) Jan Grubek.

BOŽENA: Father, please get your instruments and some permanganate.

FRANTIŠEK: Have you blisters on your feet?

MASHA: No, but permanganate's a very good thing all the same.

BOŽENA: Her feet aren't chafed. She's simply been ... Go and get the permanganate. (*Exit František.*) Do they hurt much?

MASHA: It's all right.

BOŽENA: Again that "all right." I sometimes think those are the only two words in the whole Russian language. (*Kneels down in front of Masha and begins taking the bandages off her feet. Enter František and Maček carrying a basin.*)

BOŽENA: Give it to me here, Father. No, I'll do it myself, your hands are not gentle enough. (*A pause.*) Well, and how have you been going on here, Juli? Did you think of me often?

FRANTIŠEK: He was here every Saturday.

BOŽENA: And I remembered you on Sundays. When we got our Sunday ration—twenty-five grams of sausage—I always thought of you. You always liked to eat well. But you didn't need to envy me it—it was very bad sausage. (*A pause.*) So you've got hot water running?

FRANTIŠEK: Yes, I told you so.

BOŽENA: That's very important. And I thought of it even more often than of you, Juli. I remembered you only on Sundays, but I thought of it every day. Well, now your feet are washed, Masha, but why don't you ever complain?

MASHA: But why should I?

BOŽENA: So that I could know when it hurts.

MASHA: But why?

BOŽENA: That's the way you always go on. Look here, Father.

FRANTIŠEK (*kneeling down*): Oh!

BOŽENA: What?

FRANTIŠEK: A week in bandages, at the least.

BOŽENA: All right then, she'll lie here a week in bandages.

MAČEK: Maybe ...

BOŽENA: Maybe what, Juli?

MAČEK: Maybe we can think of something better?

BOŽENA: But what could be better? A com-

fortable home, Father's a doctor, I'm here.

MAČEK: Yes, but we might think up something more sensible, maybe.

MASHA: Maybe it really would be better for me to go somewhere else ...

MAČEK: Maybe I can find some good place ...

BOŽENA: Maybe you'll be quiet?

MAČEK: I only want things to be done sensibly.

FRANTIŠEK: Every house has its way of doing things. In my house, it's my way. (*To Masha*) Give me your other foot. That's it. I know it's painful. You're a brave girl!

BOŽENA: No, it's not hurting her terribly much just now. When it's really bad, she sings.

GRUBEK: What does she sing?

BOŽENA: All kinds of songs. She sings so that nobody should know it hurts. (*A pause.*) Where's Anna?

FRANTIŠEK: Anna's gone. She went to look after her brother's children. He was arrested.

BOŽENA: Who've we got now?

FRANTIŠEK: Nobody. There's been only Ludwig and I. We've been doing everything ourselves.

BOŽENA: What a pity! It was so lovely having Anna bring coffee to me in bed. Her linens were always fresh and crisp.

GRUBEK: Anna ... I remember her when she was quite young, twenty years ago.

BOŽENA: Heavens, Pan Grubek, I've only just realized that you—that it's you. I seem to remember you vaguely from when I was a child. Are you living with us now?

GRUBEK: If hiding can be called living, then I am.

BOŽENA (*to Maček*): But you're not hiding?

MAČEK: No.

BOŽENA: And your clinic's working all right? No trouble?

MAČEK: Yes, it's all right. Why?

BOŽENA: Just a natural interest on the part of its future mistress.

MAČEK: Yes, in the clinic everything's in order. A doctor is still a doctor.

BOŽENA (*with barely perceptible irony*): Ah, how right you are! Right as usual.

(*Nodding towards the sitting-room door.*)

Is the big sofa still there?

FRANTIŠEK: Yes.

BOŽENA (*to Masha*): You'll live in there. It'll be more cheerful for you than upstairs. And the main thing, you'll not have to go up and down the stairs. (*Sound of voices outside the door.*) Ludwig! (*Enter Ludwig and Tihy.*) Ludwig! (*Embraces him.*) You've grown really handsome! (*To Tihy.*) Pan Tihy!

TIHY: Pan Tihy!

BOŽENA (*gesturing towards Masha*): That's my friend. (*Tihy kisses Masha's hand.*) Sit down, I'm delighted to see you. (*Pause.*)

My neighbour girl peeps out; the roguish pretty creature.

O, what is she to me? A shadow on the wall.



Yet all the world is losing every lovely  
feature,  
When on the window heavy curtains fall.  
It was for me you wrote that long ago?  
Confess, now!

TIHY: Yes, yes.

BOŽENA: And do you still sit by the window in your dressing-gown in the evening writing your intolerable and charming verses, and do you still publish books of poems without your picture so as not to disappoint your readers? Do you?

TIHY: Yes, in a way.

LUDWIG: Today he killed a Gestapo man!

BOŽENA: What?

LUDWIG: He killed a German today, someone from the Gestapo who came to arrest him. He killed him with the inkwell.

BOŽENA: What is this I hear? Poets starting to kill Germans in this town! Oh, I'm beginning to like old Prague again.

TIHY: Why, had you stopped liking it?

BOŽENA: Yes. It was too quiet all these years. It didn't suit it. (*To Tihy.*) But you know, seven years ago when you came back from Spain and you hadn't got so fat, and above all, there was fire in your eyes—then I liked you. And if you hadn't regarded me as just a little girl then, I might have made a fool of myself. But after that, your verses became better and better every year, and you yourself worse and worse, fatter and fatter. And after a while I couldn't even believe that you had been in Spain.

TIHY: Don't talk of that, Pani Božena.

BOŽENA: Why?

TIHY: It hurts too much.

BOŽENA: What—that I didn't fall in love with you?

TIHY: No, that I myself stopped believing that I ever had been in Spain.

BOŽENA: But today you remembered it?

TIHY: For the first time. (*Pause.*) You escaped from the camp?

BOŽENA: Yes.

TIHY: Are you stopping here?

BOŽENA: Yes.

TIHY (*to František*): Pan Prohazka, permit me to take my leave.

FRANTIŠEK: Where are you going?

TIHY: I'm going to town.

FRANTIŠEK: Don't you dare say it, Pan Tihy.

LUDWIG: You're not going anywhere, Pan Tihy. You're going to hide here.

TIHY: No. And what's more, I'm not going to hide at all. I find it hard enough to hide with men, but to hide with women is a bit too much for me. I shan't hide at all. I shall go to Prague and walk about the streets. I don't care a rap for them. To hell with them!

LUDWIG: Pan Tihy, stop here! Till tomorrow, at least. Tomorrow we'll go to Prague together. In the morning. Or maybe, even tonight.

GRUBEK: What's that about tonight?

FRANTIŠEK: Where are you going? Why tomorrow morning? What's that about tomorrow? What are you talking about?

LUDWIG: Nothing.

FRANTIŠEK: What do you know? Tell me.

LUDWIG: I don't know anything.

TIHY: Can you let me have a jacket?

FRANTIŠEK: Of course. Bring one, Ludwig.

TIHY: Well... (*Kisses Masha's and Božena's hands.*)

BOŽENA: You know, 'you've got a little thinner, really you have!

TIHY: No, I'm fat and old, Pani Božena. Very fat and very old. (*Ludwig hands him a jacket.*) Yes, it doesn't meet.

(*Distant, unexpected firing. Maček puts out one of the lights and goes to the other.*)

GRUBEK: No, that's too much. I'm not a cat to see in the dark.

FRANTIŠEK: What's all that? Shooting again? (*Ludwig starts convulsively and dashes for the stairs to go up.*) Where are you going, Ludwig?

LUDWIG: I'll be back in a minute.

TIHY: But what is this?

MASHA (*calmly*): Probably the uprising.

MAČEK: What uprising?

MASHA: It's probably your folks rising up against the Germans. As Božena and I were walking here, I was thinking all the time, why don't your people rise. I told her ...

(*Ludwig comes down the stairs, a revolver in his hand.*)

FRANTIŠEK (*seizing him by the shoulder*): You're not going to stir a step out of here! I've given enough with Stefan fighting God knows where ... And maybe he's killed ... I've given enough already.

LUDWIG (*grimly*): That was the signal. Let me go.

FRANTIŠEK: What?

LUDWIG: Let me go, I tell you. Let me go!

FRANTIŠEK: Where did you get that revolver from?

LUDWIG: Revolver? I've had it for a long time, ever since ... since ... (*Looks at Grubek and Maček.*) It doesn't matter now, I can say it. I've had the revolver since we hid that Russian here, that parachutist. He gave it to me before he left. He told me: "When you're seventeen, we're sure to be somewhere near your Prague, and then you take that revolver and join the fight!"

GRUBEK: František, let him go! Come here and let me kiss you, Ludwig, and God keep you. (*To František.*) Go on, kiss your son. He's a fine lad.

(*František kisses Ludwig.*)

TIHY (*to Ludwig*): Have you only one revolver?

LUDWIG: Of course. Why, do you know how to shoot?

TIHY: How old are you?

LUDWIG: Seventeen.

TIHY: When you were eight, I was a lieutenant in the Spanish Republican Army. You're an impudent little scamp, that's what you are, but I'm going along with you, devil take it! And don't look at my bay window like that, you rascal! Come on! (*Exit together with Ludwig.*)



*(The same. Three days later. Masha comes out of the sitting-room, limping, with her hand on the wall for support. Groaning, she seats herself in the rocking chair. She is wearing a man's large dressing-gown that reaches nearly to her toes, with the sleeves turned up. On her feet are men's bedroom slippers. The large clock hanging on the wall strikes midnight. Masha starts. Božena comes downstairs, in a pretty frock, her hair nicely dressed. She is carrying a dress, shoes and stockings.)*

BOŽENA: Can't you sleep?

MASHA: I wanted to walk about a little ...

In these three days my feet have almost stopped hurting altogether ...

BOŽENA: And I've brought you a frock, my favourite. It's kind of young and girlish. It'll suit you. And the shoes ... Heavens, how nice it is to feel clean again, pretty and well-dressed. I spent three hours in my bath today. Only you and I can understand that, eh?

MASHA: Why only we two?

BOŽENA: Oh, well, maybe not only we, but ten million others. I know all you want to say. But just now ... now I only want to think about you and me. Hot water.. You're thin. I'll alter the frock for you myself. Take off that ugly dressing-gown. *(Strokes the dressing-gown.)* That dear, nice old dressing-gown. Stefan used to walk about in it in the mornings, and he was always whistling. We're twins, you know. But he's much jollier than I am. Jollier and better in every way.

MASHA: And where's he now?

BOŽENA: I don't know. Three years ago he was in Russia, and I think he was fighting, or else preparing to fight. *(Whistles.)* Dear old dressing-gown. *(Goes up to the mirror.)* Last time I wore this frock it was for the student ball where I went with Stefan. Do you like me in it?

MASHA: Very much.

BOŽENA: So do I. *(A shot is heard.)* How much longer will the firing go on? You always know everything. How much longer before your people come?

MASHA: If our men don't come today or tomorrow, it'll be bad. The Germans have taken three quarters of the town again.

BOŽENA: How do you know?

MASHA: Ludwig told me.

BOŽENA: Why did he tell it to you alone?

Yes, yes, I know, he told you because he doesn't take me seriously. He thinks I ought to run out there to them in the street and carry cartridges. But I can't. I've been through enough in these two years. I want to live. I can't go and carry cartridges now. Well, why don't you scold me, why don't you say I'm no good?

MASHA: You'd have been home five days earlier if you hadn't been helping me along.

BOŽENA: Be quiet.

MASHA: You're a grand girl, only ...

BOŽENA: What?

MASHA: Only you, and all of you ... you've not seen much so far ...

BOŽENA: I haven't seen much? Heavens! I haven't seen much! Then what was it like with you?

MASHA: I've told you.

BOŽENA: Yes, yes ... but don't let's talk about all that. Oh, what wouldn't I give

to see you when you get out of the train, walk along the street, and come to your home town, and you meet your folks again, how glad they'll all be. Well? Why don't you say anything?

MASHA: I'm from Stalingrad.

BOŽENA: Well, but suppose just your house ... after all, not all the houses ...

MASHA: All of them.

BOŽENA: Well but if ... if you don't find your mother when you come back to the town, where will you go?

MASHA: To the district committee of the Young Communist League.

BOŽENA: And how do you know they're all still alive there?

MASHA: Somebody'll be alive. *(Sings softly: "His orders sent him towards the East, her orders sent her to the West. All the Young Communists departed in the Civil War to fight.")* Show me the frock.

BOŽENA: Do you like it?

MASHA: Yes.

BOŽENA: And the shoes? *(Shows them.)*

MASHA: They're nice. Only I've never worn shoes with heels like that. *(She rises from the chair with difficulty, and takes a couple of steps towards the mirror.)*

BOŽENA: Where are you going?

MASHA: I want to see what I look like. Let me hold up the frock. And on heels? *(She rises on tip-toe and drops again with a groan.)* No, they still hurt. *(Sits down in the chair. The sound of firing more distinctly heard.)* Ludwig said this morning that the Germans are demolishing barricade after barricade with their tanks. What will you do if they come here again?

BOŽENA: I don't know. And you?

MASHA: I? *(A long pause.)*

BOŽENA *(walking up and down the room):*

When I look at you from the back, now, in that dressing-gown, it seems like Stefan sitting there. He was just as obstinate as you are. *(A pause.)* Will they really come back here again? *(Grubek enters from the verandah, a book in his hand and a towel flung over his shoulder.)* Pan Grubek, what's the meaning of all this?

GRUBEK: I'm making soup. I discovered a tin of fish in your cupboard and I'm making some soup with it.

BOŽENA: It probably won't be fit to eat.

GRUBEK: I suppose not. I rather fancy I've boiled it too long. I was stirring it with a spoon and reading Dostoyevsky at the same time. *(To Masha.)* Have you read Dostoyevsky?

MASHA: Yes, of course.

GRUBEK: And do you like him?

MASHA: No.

GRUBEK: If this rising lasts another fortnight I'll be turning into a cook. Though for that matter ... *(listens)* it doesn't look



as though it will last a fortnight. If only I were even ten years younger! ...

MASHA: And how old are you?

GRUBEK: Fifty-three.

MASHA: My father was fifty-four when he joined the People's Guard.

BOŽENA (*after a pause*): Why don't you say something, Pan Grubek?

GRUBEK: Dostoyevsky is right—the Russians are an inscrutable people.

MASHA: No, that's not true.

GRUBEK: Why?

MASHA: It's not true. It's just that we love freedom more.

GRUBEK: People love freedom everywhere. And perhaps here they're even more used to it than you are. That's not the point.

MASHA: You're wrong. I was in three camps, and in that time there were eleven escapes. There were all kinds of people there, every nationality, but all eleven escapes were organized by our people, by Russians. All eleven of them. (*A pause.*) I don't know—maybe it doesn't sound very nice to be praising my own people—it's almost like praising myself. But tell me now, who loves freedom more, who's more used to it? Those who sit and wait for others to free them when they find themselves slaves, or those who can't endure it and escape?

BOŽENA (*to Grubek*): Yes, take her, for instance ...

MASHA: I'm not talking about myself.

GRUBEK (*goes up to Masha and kisses her hand*): Dostoyevsky was right, all the same. The Russians really are an inscrutable people. (*Mounts the stairs book in hand.*)

MASHA: Where are you going? You're not offended with me?

GRUBEK: No. I just wanted to finish reading my Dostoyevsky before ... (*Listens intently.*)

BOŽENA: Before what, Pan Grubek?

GRUBEK: Before the Germans come back here again. (*Exit.*)

BOŽENA: You're tired. I'll move the rocking chair over here, and put out that light. Try to get some sleep. There ... is that right?

MASHA: Yes, fine. Thank you.

(*A knock at the door.*)

BOŽENA: Come in. (*Enter Tihy.*) Be quiet. Sit down here beside me. (*Beckons him to sit on the divan, in the opposite corner of the room.*) Well, what more bad news have you brought? You're all black ...

TIHY: From chagrin. They've driven me away.

BOŽENA: Who's driven you away?

TIHY: How shall I put it?—My readers. This morning a shell fell on our barricade, and some stones caught me on the head. I had to lie down half the day. Then they said that there are too few good poets in Bohemia, and sent me packing. And I obeyed them. Foolish of me, for I don't want to live any longer anyway. Tomorrow the uprising is certain to be crushed, and nothing yet to be heard of the Russians.

BOŽENA: But after all, the Russians will come here—in three days, or five ...

TIHY: Too late. For me that'll be too late. I can't stand the thought of the Germans here again, even for a single day. For six years I endured them like some animal, some dull beast. But in these three days I've breathed again. I've seen people on the barricades who made me feel proud once more to be a Czech. I've been alive! I stood it for six years, now I can't stand it for a single day! I can't and won't live that way! (*A pause.*) But you know, man's just a beast after all, I don't want to live, but I do want to eat terribly. I've had nothing for two days. We forgot all about such things there. Give me something to eat. I'm a glutton, you know. (*Suddenly.*) I told you I don't want to live. No, I do want to. When I was young and felt afraid to die, I told myself it was a shame for a man to leave his young, handsome body. And now it seems even harder to leave this old and ugly one. There, you see, how stupid and contemptible a creature man is, that is, if we're talking about myself. But all the same, give me something to eat.

BOŽENA: I'll give you some soup Pan Grubek's made. It's probably foul.

TIHY: As far as I'm concerned, there's nothing more foul on earth just now than my own self ... Never mind what the soup's like.

MAČEK (*entering*): How do you do, Božena. Pan Tihy, I want to ask you ...

TIHY: Later on! I've no time now. I'm in a hurry. I'm going to eat some soup. (*Exit together with Božena. Maček paces up and down the room. Notices Masha sleeping.*)

MAČEK: Pani Marial! (*Silence.*)

BOŽENA (*entering*): It's Wednesday today, not Saturday. Why have you come?

MAČEK: I've known for many years now that you have a sharp tongue. But I've come to have a serious talk with you.

BOŽENA: And why have you come without flowers?

MAČEK: I've come to talk to you, quietly and seriously. (*Lowering his voice.*) Where's your father?

BOŽENA: In his study. Driving away unpleasant thoughts by slowly putting to death his thousand two hundred and fifty-eighth rabbit. Though in these days I'd have preferred simply to roast the rabbit. Do you want to talk to Father?

MAČEK: Not just now; on the contrary. Tell me one thing, you believe that I love you?

BOŽENA: As far as you're capable of it—yes.

MAČEK: I'm capable of more than you think. (*Listens to the noise outside the window.*)

I hope you've already realized today that the uprising will soon be done with. The Germans are four blocks away from here.

BOŽENA: So close?

MAČEK: Thank heaven, you're taking it seriously at last, Your elder brother, your younger brother, that Russian girl ... And you, for that matter, you too, you escaped from the camp. You understand what that means?

BOŽENA: I can guess.

MAČEK: Before the Russians come, in three days, maybe four or five—you realize what



the Germans can do in your house? After all they've nothing to lose now.

BOŽENA: I suppose you have some suggestion to make to me?

MAČEK: Put on your things at once and come with me.

BOŽENA: Where?

MAČEK: To my house. If there's firing—into my cellar. We'll either live through it, or else die together. You understand me?

BOŽENA (*almost tenderly*): Thank you, dear.

MAČEK: You agree?

BOŽENA: No. I'm simply thanking you. You aren't yet ready to die for me, but you are prepared to die together with me. Well, that's something.

MAČEK: You're mad. This is no laughing matter! There was firing in the streets as I was coming to you.

BOŽENA: I'm not laughing. I'm only telling you that I'm not going with you.

MAČEK: Why?

BOŽENA: Because this is my home, and I haven't been in it for a very long time. And here is my father, my brother, and what is still more important, our guests. No, I'm not coming with you. (*A pause.*) I haven't worn this for six years, and I think it looks lovely. What do you think?

MAČEK: Answer me, are you coming?

BOŽENA: That's not polite. I asked you if you think I look nice today?

MAČEK: Very nice, very nice. (*Furiously.*) Perfectly marvellous! Are you coming?

BOŽENA: No.

MAČEK: Well, all right... Then in that case...

BOŽENA: In that case... what?

MAČEK: In that case I... I'll take that friend of yours and get her away, at least.

BOŽENA: Why?

MAČEK: So that you'll be alone here. Maybe they won't pay any attention to you if you're alone.

BOŽENA: She can't walk.

MAČEK: Never mind, she'll manage to.

BOŽENA: No.

MAČEK: She'll get that far. I'll help her along.

BOŽENA: No.

MAČEK: What do you want me to do, then? I'm prepared to hide her, a complete stranger to me.

BOŽENA: A stranger? If it hadn't been for her, if it hadn't been for the Russians, I'd have rotted in that camp for twenty years more.

MAČEK: Maybe you want to take a gun and go out on the barricades?

BOŽENA: No, I despise myself for it, but I'm not going. But what about you?

MAČEK: How do you mean?

BOŽENA: Why haven't you gone? To them... out there in the street? After all, you're a doctor... Though what's the use of talking of the impossible? Kiss my hand. And goodbye. Don't be angry. Come again when everything's all right.

FRANTIŠEK (*coming down the stairs*): There, you see, Božena, he's come. And you were abusing him and saying that now, when there's an uprising, he'd disappeared

as though the earth had swallowed him up. But I told her, Juli, that you wouldn't be able to keep away, that you'd come to us when things were bad too, that you would be with us, in this house, where we have been accustomed to seeing you as our guest for so many years. You see, Božena, how wrong you are sometimes.

BOŽENA: Yes, I'm very often wrong.

FRANTIŠEK (*offering Maček a cigarette*): Smoke, Juli?

MAČEK: Thanks. Where did you get them?

FRANTIŠEK: I happened to find this packet in my table drawer today. To tell the truth, ever since I dropped practice and devoted myself to my experiments, we haven't been living so well here.

MAČEK: You could have gone on with both.

FRANTIŠEK: I didn't want to treat Germans. I'm too good a doctor and I might have cured them too often. And I didn't want that.

MAČEK: Is that meant for me?

FRANTIŠEK: No. It's one of my rules to live and let live. Hasn't Ludwig come?

BOŽENA: No.

(*Enter Tihy.*)

FRANTIŠEK: Well, Boguslav, how's everything?

TIHY: Better than I expected. Wonderful soup.

FRANTIŠEK: You're crazy. I'm asking you how things are there?

TIHY: Oh, there? Bad.

(*All listen to the cannonade. Grubek appears on the stairs. He also listens. Suddenly firing begins close to the windows, mingling with the sharp rumble of tanks.*)

MASHA (*awakening, cries out*): What's that?

MAČEK: The Germans. Put the light out.

(*All lights out. Flashes, beams from headlights seen through the glass doors of verandah. Rumbling noises and shots. Božena's voice in the darkness.*)

BOŽENA: Masha, where are you?

MASHA: Come here.

TIHY: Pan Prohazka, give me a cigarette. When I'm afraid I always want to smoke.

(*The door to the hallway opens with a crash, and a band of light streams in. Ludwig's voice: "What's happened? Why's it dark here?" Lights go up. In the hallway—Petrov in a short leatherjacket over his uniform, holding his left arm away from his body. Beside him, Ludwig, two or three of the People's Guard and Goncharenko.*)

MASHA: Good Heavens!

(*She is sitting motionless, a revolver in her hand. The revolver drops to the floor with a clatter.*)

FRANTIŠEK (*going to meet Petrov*): Thank God you've come! (*Embraces him, and moves towards Goncharenko*). And you... (*Wants to embrace him too.*)

LUDWIG: Afterwards, Dad. Afterwards. Get your bag. There's an officer here, wounded.



FRANTIŠEK: Juli, run to my study, my bag's on a chair there. (To Petrov.) Where are you wounded?

PETROV (showing him): Here.

FRANTIŠEK: Ludwig, give me a knife!

PETROV: Goncharenko, haven't you a knife?

GONCHARENKO (taking one from his belt): Are you a doctor?

FRANTIŠEK: Yes, a doctor.

LUDWIG: He's a doctor all right.

GONCHARENKO: Here you are, then.

PETROV: No, we won't cut that. This jacket has associations for me. Here, Goncharenko.

(Goncharenko draws off Petrov's jacket. The process is evidently painful, but he makes no sound.) That's the way. Cut the tunic! (The jacket off, he is seen to have the three stars of a colonel on his epaulettes, one gold star<sup>1</sup> and no other decorations. Maček appears on the stairs with the doctor's bag.)

LUDWIG (impatiently): Hurry, throw it down! (Maček throws down the bag.) Here you are, Father!

FRANTIŠEK: A bowl! (Ludwig takes an antique copper bowl from a shelf and puts it on the floor.) Perhaps you'd better sit down?

PETROV: But it's more convenient for you if I stand, isn't it?

FRANTIŠEK: Yes.

PETROV: Goncharenko! Drive the car onto the pavement, or else the tanks'll crush it. Don't get excited, Doctor. Keep cool. (Looking hard at František.) Yes, Professor, you've got older. The last time you removed a bullet from me your hands didn't tremble. FRANTIŠEK: I? From you?

PETROV: Forgotten it? Yes, three years—that's quite a while. Though not much has changed here in that time. Ludwig was only a boy then and now he's quite a man. Yes, and you've moved the piano.

BOŽENA (standing motionless all this time): Yes, and I've got older by two years in a concentration camp, and you've got older too...

PETROV: Did you recognize me at once? (Stretches out his right hand to her.) Even in spite of this? (Points to his bandage.)

BOŽENA: Yes, I knew you at once. (František standing in a daze.)

PETROV: Please, let's get it done, Professor.

FRANTIŠEK: Pan... Pan...

PETROV: Petrov now... Colonel Petrov. It's all right, pull it tighter. Don't be afraid. (To Ludwig.) Where's my revolver?

LUDWIG: Here it is.

PETROV: You believed that I'd come back to Prague, as I promised?

LUDWIG: Yes, I believed it.

FRANTIŠEK (finishing his bandaging): That's all.

PETROV: Thanks. (Pressing František's hand.) I've often thought of you, Pan Prohazka. (Nodding towards Masha.) And who's that?

MASHA (rising): Senior Sergeant Kononenkova.

PETROV (going up to her): What?! A Russian? Did you escape from a camp?

MASHA: Yes.

PETROV: You're a nurse?

MASHA: No, a radio operator.

PETROV: You crossed the front with a patrol?

MASHA: Yes.

PETROV: You're wounded?

MASHA: They burned my feet,

PETROV: We'll talk about that later. Sit down. Get better. (Smooths her hair.)

Goncharenko, my jacket.

FRANTIŠEK: You don't know anything about my son this time?

PETROV: I know he was alive a year ago. That's all. Well, I'm off.

BOŽENA: We shall see you again, I hope?

PETROV: Yes, I'll come to thank you for your hospitality.

FRANTIŠEK: What sort of hospitality is this?

PETROV: I don't mean today's—everybody's hospitable today. I mean that time, three years ago. (Exit, followed by Goncharenko, Ludwig and the People's Guards.)

MAČEK: You didn't even tell me three years ago that a Russian was hiding here...

BOŽENA: We didn't think it necessary.

TIHY: I didn't know anything about it either. How strange... And even sad...

(The scream of jammed-on brakes. Stejan bursts in, wearing the uniform of the Czech corps. He halts for a second by the door and shouts.)

STEFAN: Just time to kiss you all! (Embraces his father and Božena.) Who else is here?

Boguslav? (Embraces him too.) Victory! Congratulations! (Sees Grubek, embraces him.) Congratulations!

FRANTIŠEK: That's my old friend. That's...

STEFAN: It's wonderful! I could hug everybody...

(Embraces Maček and approaches Masha.)

BOŽENA: This is Masha. She and I...

STEFAN: Russian?

MASHA: Yes.

STEFAN (kissing her): Congratulations! Congratulations to all of you! Now I'm off again!

FRANTIŠEK: Where are you going?

STEFAN: Further on. I'll soon be back. Come with me to the car. (Runs out. All follow him except Masha.)

MASHA (left alone, sits motionless for a second, then speaks suddenly, with a catch in her breath, like a child sobbing): Heavens, how wonderful it all is! (Dries her tears, walks slowly across the room, opens the door onto the verandah and goes out.)

FRANTIŠEK (entering with Grubek): How wonderful! What amazing happiness. (Notices the expression on Grubek's face.) Jan, what's the matter?

GRUBEK (in a dull voice, agitated): My friend, I must leave you.

FRANTIŠEK: Leave us? Now?

GRUBEK: Yes, precisely now. As long as the war was on, I had the right as a friend to seek shelter here from the Germans, at the risk of your life. But now I don't want to risk even your peace of mind.

<sup>1</sup> The Gold Star goes with the title Hero of the Soviet Union. — Ed.



Scene from *BENEATH THE CHESTNUTS OF PRAGUE*, as presented by the Leninist Komsomol Theatre in Moscow. Act I. Left to right: A. Shatov as Juli Maček, V. Yegorov as Ludwig, A. Vovsi as Boguslav Tihy, V. Vsevolodov as Jan Grubek and S. Kiligin as František Prohazka

FRANTIŠEK: I don't understand.

*(Enter Božena. She stops on the threshold, her attention is caught by the conversation between her father and Grubek. Neither of them sees her.)*

GRUBEK: As long as the war was going on, I had only one enemy—the Germans. But now your son has returned from Soviet Russia. And I am afraid that he and I differ too much in our views. We're almost enemies. In politics I belong to the extreme right, and now, after the war, I mean to fight for my opinions.

FRANTIŠEK: Yes, but there's no need to do it here.

GRUBEK: That's just what I'd have to do. And for that reason I'm saying goodbye. *(Goes towards the door.)*

FRANTIŠEK: Stop. You've gone mad! You haven't even an overcoat. You've got nothing. Where do you think you're going?

GRUBEK: You're right. I don't know that myself yet. To be quite frank with you, it wasn't only because of the Germans I ran away from Moravska-Ostrava. I was afraid that when the town was liberated my enemies in the left parties would take advantage of the general confusion to settle accounts with me. Whatever my views may be, I'm too good a Czech for that. I never lifted a finger to collaborate with the Germans. But I know that all the same, my enemies will try to brand me as a traitor. I can't go back to Moravska Ostrava till order's restored there. *(A pause.)* But all the same, thank you, and goodbye.

FRANTIŠEK: You will go on living here, and you'll leave me only when you yourself wish it. And remember, I shan't permit anybody to offend you here, not even my own son.

GRUBEK: No. If I stay it's not going to be in order to make your home a hell. I shan't quarrel with your son, I'll keep quiet, even if only out of gratitude to you. And to be frank, I simply wouldn't know where to go after closing your door behind me.

*(They shake hands. Exit Grubek.)*

BOŽENA *(walking to the middle of the room)*: Father, I heard what you both said.

FRANTIŠEK: Too bad. He opened his heart to me, not to you.

BOŽENA: Why did you persuade him to stay?

FRANTIŠEK: He's my friend.

BOŽENA: That means that there'll be a man living under the same roof with us who doesn't like Stefan.

FRANTIŠEK: When you and Stefan were six years old, you used to play horses on Grubek's knee.

BOŽENA: That was a long time ago.

FRANTIŠEK: To me, it seems like yesterday. In any case, you'll have to put up with it. I risked my life to hide Stefan's friends here just because they were his friends. How dare you object to the only friend of my youth living here, even if he doesn't like Stefan! Find some other place for your politics. This is my house. And I don't intend to drive an honest Czech from it like a dog just because he doesn't happen to share your views. Please remember that, once and for all.

*(Curtain)*



## ACT TWO

(Two days later, Sunday morning. Ludwig and Goncharenko sitting in deep armchairs by the fire. A bottle and two glasses on the table.)

LUDWIG (pouring out): Take another.

GONCHARENKO: Thank you. (Drinks.)

Good stuff, this.

LUDWIG: It's plum brandy.

GONCHARENKO: And in Yugoslavia they've got a perepačenica, and in Bulgaria there's mastika and gorchinka.<sup>1</sup>

LUDWIG (quietly): You're talking too loud. Aren't you afraid of waking ... ? (Jerks his head upwards.)

GONCHARENKO: The colonel? No, he needs to sleep a month on end if he's to sleep off all these years. How many of them he's been going, without a stop! And it's the same now ... He even got here without his division. As soon as the march on Prague started, he went straight from hospital into his jeep and got here with the first tanks. Then the general meets him in the street. "Petrov," says he, "what are you doing here? Why, you look like a ghost?" And he tells his orderly to give him a mirror. "Now look at yourself, aren't you like a ghost?" And the colonel answers: "Just so, Comrade general, a ghost." "Well, don't let me see you for a week. Go and get some rest." D'ye think he'd have been sleeping here if it hadn't been that way?

LUDWIG: You must be tired too?

GONCHARENKO: Of course, we're all tired.

It's war. Last year when we started crossing the borders, we found all the men wearing soft felt hats. And folks asked me: "Do they wear such hats in Russia too, or what?" And I'd been wearing my army cap so long, I'd even forgotten what folks wear at home, hats or caps. "I've been fighting a long time," I told them, "and I don't even remember whether our hats were good or bad. All I know is that I never took mine off to anybody..."

LUDWIG: Have you been with the colonel for long?

GONCHARENKO: Long enough.

LUDWIG: Tell me, has he flown to many countries like he did to us here?

GONCHARENKO: In general, of course, he's in the air-borne troops, but I don't fly with him. I'm his chauffeur.

LUDWIG: He's so silent.

GONCHARENKO: He's from Leningrad. He's got nobody left now. Only his four character. And me. (A pause.) What kind of a queer uniform is it you're wearing?

LUDWIG: Oh, this—when we took to arms we captured some stores. That's a German tropical outfit.

GONCHARENKO: Comfortable in the heat?

LUDWIG: Very.

GONCHARENKO: And that grey-haired man that hangs around and never takes off his jacket, who's he, your uncle or what?

LUDWIG: No, that's an old friend of my father's.

GONCHARENKO (after a pause): Hot weath-

er, and still he goes about in his jacket.

What's he got there in his pockets, money?

Why's he scared to take it off?

LUDWIG (laughing): That I can't say.

Habit, I suppose.

GONCHARENKO: I suppose so.

(Enter Božena. Goncharenko rises.)

BOŽENA: Please sit down. How did you sleep?

GONCHARENKO: Fine, thank you.

BOŽENA: The colonel's not up yet?

GONCHARENKO: No, not yet.

LUDWIG (weightily): Perhaps you'll take a glass of plum brandy with us, Božena?

BOŽENA (falling into his tone): Oh, with you? With pleasure. (She sits down and drinks a glassful.) My head's still swimming after the camp.

LUDWIG: We spent quite a nice evening yesterday, eh, Božena? Only it was a pity you didn't sing.

BOŽENA: I wasn't in the mood. (To Goncharenko.) First I was an unsuccessful doctor, then an unsuccessful lawyer, and then an unsuccessful singer. The eternal student. Does that happen in your country, too?

GONCHARENKO: Of course. But in the end they find their place.

BOŽENA: Yes?

GONCHARENKO: Yes, that's how it is with us.

BOŽENA: But with us that's not always the case.

GONCHARENKO: Excuse me, I must go to the car...

BOŽENA: Oh, certainly. (Exit Goncharenko.)

(To Ludwig): You're off duty today?

LUDWIG: Until midday.

BOŽENA: Well, and have your dreams come true? You've been fighting, and now you're quite the soldier.

LUDWIG: That's not fighting! Now, Stefan—he's fought. From Kharkov to Prague. But what have I done? Just the last three days when everything was settled anyway. Enough to make you swear.

BOŽENA: All the same, it's better than nothing.

LUDWIG: Of course. We had seventeen men killed on the barricade. It was real fighting. But how I wish it had all happened earlier, so that nobody could say: "Why did you only take to arms when everything was already settled? What were you thinking about before?"

BOŽENA (kissing him): Well, never mind. As far as you're concerned, before that you weren't even seventeen. Don't worry about it.

LUDWIG: Ensign Fentsik, our company commander, said: "What's there so great about the Czechoslovak corps in Russia? We fought the Germans too." Yes, he fought them all right—for just three days.

BOŽENA: In the six years that the Germans were here, some of our men forgot how to

<sup>1</sup> Bitters.

be men. And now they all think they're heroes. But it's simply that they've started to be men again. And that's all.

LUDWIG: But our Stefan's a grand fellow.

A real Czech. Right, eh?

BOŽENA: Yes, quite right.

LUDWIG: That's what I told Ensign Fentsik, when he started to boast.

(Enter Masha, walking slowly, but firmly.)

BOŽENA: Ludwig, give the lady your arm. Quick!

(Ludwig offers his arm to Masha, who supports herself on it, then sits down in an armchair.)

BOŽENA (kissing Masha): Well, how are you feeling?

MASHA: Today I'm twenty-one. I wanted to put on that pretty frock, I even tried it on. But I don't want to wear it with these. (She displays the slippers.) I want to put on everything at once.

BOŽENA (smiling): You're a woman, my dear, to the very tips of your fingers. Many happy returns. (Stefan comes in from outside carrying a branch of chestnut blossoms.)

STEFAN (to Masha): There's nothing in the flower shops. I rode through Bubenech, climbed into somebody's garden and stole this branch of chestnut for you—an unforgivable offence for a law-abiding Czech. You're still in a dressing-gown? I thought I'd find you in a frock today.

MASHA: I'm so sick of the sight of my bandaged feet, and your dressing-gown's nice and long.

STEFAN: In a couple of days we'll go to Bubenech together. We'll go into any garden and I'll say that I want to pick flowers for this Russian girl.

BOŽENA: I'm sure nobody'll refuse you.

MASHA: Really?

STEFAN: It's so lovely in Bubenech! When the trees begin to blossom, it's always beautiful and always the same. I suddenly thought of the Kiev poplars... before the war. When we stormed in there in November, there weren't any left along that street... how's it called...

MASHA: Kreshchatik?

STEFAN: Yes, I think that's it. Four scorching years of war. No spring and no autumn. Only war. But now that's all past and gone, and spring's come again... In a couple of days we'll drive through Prague, I'll show it to you. I love this town almost as though it were a living person. I want you to like it. I want you to feel happy here.

MASHA: I feel very happy here.

STEFAN: I want you to feel happier still. How many times in these five years in Russia, when I was enjoying Russian hospitality, fighting with Russian arms, sleeping in Russian homes, my wounds treated by Russian girls—how many times I've thought: "You dear, kind people! Just wait till I get home, to Prague! Then it'll be my turn, and what won't I do for you! But whatever I do, it's too little!" (A pause.) Russia means much to me, Masha, Soviet Russia, very much. (A pause.)

You know, my dressing-gown suits you wonderfully. You understand?

MASHA (uncertainly): Ye-e-es.

STEFAN: You're a woman, you don't understand anything about it. You don't even understand that you looked even better when you were sitting in the dense forest tapping out on your key: "Moscow, do you hear me? Moscow!"

PETROV (appears at the head of the stairs then descends): Moscow's listening. What's that you want to transmit to Moscow, Stefan?

STEFAN: I want to thank it because it's in our house that Masha's living, and in this way we can return at least a little of that Russian hospitality here in Prague.

PETROV (putting his sound arm around Stefan's shoulders): Only be careful, com-patriot, don't pay too much attention to all these flowers and hand-kissing and talk about nature and the forest in spring-time and autumn. All that's just on the surface. But underneath he's a real soldier. A rough diamond.

STEFAN: Ivan Alexeyevich!

PETROV: Don't be offended. I'm only joking. And, yet, maybe not... If I'm not mistaken, you're twenty-one today, Masha.

MASHA: Yes, Comrade Colonel.

PETROV (taking a notebook from his pocket): Give me your address.

MASHA: Which one?

PETROV: Your home address.

MASHA: Why?

PETROV: You'll know in good time. What is it?

MASHA: Stalingrad.

PETROV: Yes?

MASHA: Podvalnaya 17, apartment 3. Only I'm afraid nothing's left of it... If so, then just—the Stalin District Committee of the Young Communist League.

PETROV: Very good. (Shuts the notebook and puts it back in his pocket.) Next time I go abroad, when times are quieter, I'll go into the very best shop and buy you a suitcase full of everything that can delight your heart.

MASHA: Not for anything! You've got people of your own...

PETROV: That's none of your business, whether there's anybody or not...

BOŽENA: If it's in Prague, I'll help you.

PETROV: Thank you. I want to see my fellow-countrywoman well dressed. I want to see all our girls well dressed. But Masha even a bit before the others—she's gone through more than most of them and she has a right to such feminine delight a bit sooner.

BOŽENA: But in the camp Masha always said that you've got everything over there.

PETROV: She's too proud to say anything else in front of strangers. But as far as I'm concerned, your home (nods at Stefan) is a friend's home. Yes, our women are going about just now in God knows what. Their stockings are just darns on patches. Don't frown, Masha, you know it's true. There's a great deal we haven't got, and we shan't have it all as soon as we'd like to. Well, what would you? Old Russia was



a hundred years behind the rest of Europe. We've closed the gap, and were already in sight of a better life. But on the day when war broke out we were ready to sacrifice everything for victory. You know, Pani Bożena, in Europe people often have a great deal to say about the hardships of war. But they don't always know what hardships are. I mean real hardships.

BOŻENA: When I used to ask Stefan, he always told me that everything was fine with you, just like Masha.

PETROV: Stefan? Stefan's a good fellow, he's very fond of the Soviet Union and so when he talks about it, he only wants to say that everything's fine there. I can understand him. But there's no need to hide anything here! After saving Europe, we've nothing to be ashamed of in front of anybody, not of our wives' darned stockings, or because whole families lived in tiny rooms. Yes, that's all true. But our soldiers were armed, clothed and well fed. No, we weren't rich enough to have everything. We didn't build residential houses, we built factories instead. And the Germans marched along the streets of Paris, but never along the streets of Moscow.

BOŻENA: You don't like Europe, do you?

PETROV: Why do you think so?

BOŻENA: I shouldn't think you would. You're probably annoyed by all these one-family houses, these villas, these houses with iron roofs. After all, you don't accept such things, do you?

PETROV: One may refuse to accept an idea, but not an iron roof. If it's there, then it's there.

STEFAN: In Russia they believe in iron roofs, Bożena, and in comfort and nice homes. But the Russians are strategists first and foremost, they know how to look ahead and when in some decisive moment it's a case of choosing between one more tank or one more living comfort, well, in Russia they choose one thing and in Europe another. (*Silence.*) You understand, Bożena?

PETROV: How do you think, Masha, can they understand our simplest idea?

BOŻENA: If you only knew how well she explained everything we wanted to know, there in the camp.

MASHA: You know, Comrade Colonel, what I used to tell the girls in the camp when I talked to them?

PETROV: Well, what did you tell them?

MASHA: I used to tell them—'See, I was born in the village of Gorodishche, Kalach district. And if I met somebody from Gorodishche when I was in Kalach, I'd say—'We're compatriots, we're both from Gorodishche.' Then when I came to Stalingrad and met somebody from Kalach district, I'd say—'We're fellow citizens and compatriots, we're from Kalach.' And in Moscow, when I met somebody from Stalingrad, I'd also say we're compatriots, from the same parts. And now here we're abroad, and you call me compatriot; and you're right, we are compatriots, Russians. But what is even more important is that some day people will

meet and say to each other: "You live on this earth and so do I, both of us in the same world, that means we're compatriots." And that's all there is to it.

GRUBEK (*appearing in the doorway*): May I join you?

STEFAN: Please do, Pan Grubek.

GRUBEK (*to Petrov*): I could hear you pacing up and down in your room last night. You must have been a long time getting to sleep.

PETROV: Yes. I could hear you too, you didn't sleep for a good while either.

GRUBEK: I was dreaming of the future, walking and thinking.

PETROV: And what was it you were thinking of?

GRUBEK: That the future of Europe belongs to the Russians. It is they who are the victors. And by that, they showed their superiority and their right to help reconstruct Europe.

PETROV: And do you want it to be reconstructed?

GRUBEK: I'm not a young man, and I have certain prejudices, but in general, yes. I think it needs to be reconstructed.

PETROV: Well, then, get to work! Roll up your sleeves and help!

FRANTIŠEK (*entering*): Who's that wanting to roll up his sleeves? If there's going to be a tussle, I'm quite ready to go back to my student days.

GRUBEK: No, we were just getting ready to reconstruct Europe. (*To Petrov.*) Well, I suppose you're right, and František and I must roll up our sleeves. And if we old ones don't understand anything, then our children (*nodding towards Stefan and Bożena*) can help us. Do you agree, Pani Bożena?

BOŻENA (*curtly*): I'm going to open the door to the verandah. Let's go out there. It's getting too stuffy in here. (*Exit.*)

STEFAN: Prague's a happy town. They haven't even an idea here of what the Germans did to Russia. That's where folks'll have to roll up their sleeves: That's where things are going to be difficult...

PETROV: You're right and you're wrong.

STEFAN: I'm right.

PETROV: Only half right. When you go home and see burned-down houses, that's hard. But when you come home and the houses are standing, the streets are sprinkled every morning, but things are far from being the way you want them to be, and not only your friends, but your enemies too, are walking about your house, then that's harder than just houses that are razed to the ground. You think of how difficult it's going to be for us, but I think of the difficulties awaiting you.

GRUBEK: The war's over now, Pan Colonel, but you haven't cooled down inside yet; and then they say that Russians are quick to forgive and forget.

PETROV: I don't know about that. I'm a Russian and I'm not so very quick at forgiving and forgetting, I shouldn't advise anybody to count on it.

BOŻENA (*entering*): Everything's ready out there, come along.



FRANTIŠEK (*rising, conciliatingly*): In any case, whatever accounts have to be settled after the war, one thing is clear: the future belongs to us Slavs.

STEFAN: That word "Slav" is now being used a bit too often.

FRANTIŠEK: Why, is it such a bad word?

STEFAN: No, but it's not enough just to say "We're Slavs." The word "Slav" rings proudly when you can show a good record of what you've done in the war for the future, but not when you just say: "I'm a Slav." Well and good, you're a Slav, but tell me what have you to show for it?

FRANTIŠEK: In my veins runs the blood of people who have lived for hundreds of years in the belly of the German whale without being digested or assimilated and in the end, like Jonah, came up again. And I'm proud of it!

STEFAN: And I too. When we advanced on German machine-guns, up to the waist in Russian snow, we remembered the names of Huss and Zizka no worse than you, but I'm not talking of our forefathers. I'm saying that the only people who have a right to take a pride in those names are those who honour them not with words, but with deeds.

*(František leaves silently, followed by Pe'rov, Masha and Ludwig.)*

GRUBEK (*to Stefan*): Nobody can blame your father and myself for not having fought, rifle in hand. We're in our fifties. But we've been with you in spirit throughout the war. And that means something.

STEFAN: I didn't mean to hurt either you or father ... *(Goes out onto the verandah. Grubek follows him.)*

BOŽENA (*stopping him at the door*): Wait a moment, I want to talk to you...

GRUBEK: At your service.

BOŽENA: Why do you pretend, why do you flatter the Russians? Why are you lying all the time?

GRUBEK: I—lying?

BOŽENA: Yes. I heard what you said.

GRUBEK: What I said—when?

BOŽENA: That time, to Father. Have the courage to say what you think, or at least—be silent.

GRUBEK: All right.

BOŽENA: What's all right?

GRUBEK: All right, I'll be silent.

BOŽENA: Come out onto the verandah.

GRUBEK: No. Wait a minute. Sit down. That's it. Now it's my turn to tell you a few straight words. It's about yourself. That concentration camp turned your head left. Indeed, there's a lot going on just now that I don't like. I don't like the left parties having power, I don't like certain Czechs that have returned from Russia. Yes, more than anything else I always wanted to be rich. But you too ... Just now you're still full of wrath and fury, but another month of hot baths, pretty frocks, good perfumes, and you'll drop all that and become what you used to be.

BOŽENA: And that is...

GRUBEK: A woman of our world. And a beautiful woman, a woman who demands a lot. Don't deny it—there's an avid flare about your nostrils. You like flowers, good cars, the admiration of men. Don't try to deny it! You don't like me personally, you're not particularly in love with your fiancé. But you do like us.

BOŽENA: Whom do you mean by "us"?

GRUBEK: We, the men of your own world, men who can make money and shower it upon you. Make no mistake—you belong to our world, and anything else is nothing but a mirage that will fade in a month. You pretend not to like our society, but remember, in this society you are everything, and in that which you want to force yourself to like, you would be nothing. Just now you like that man sitting out there. But his wife's most certainly an unhappy woman.

BOŽENA: Why?

GRUBEK: Because he is here today, and gone to-morrow. Because just like all of them, not one hour of his time belongs to himself entirely. Because in the middle of the night he can be dragged out of bed in Moscow to drop from the skies into the middle of Prague. Once or twice that may seem very romantic, but it's terrible after a while, and when life consists of nothing else, then it's hell for the wife.

BOŽENA: He has no wife.

GRUBEK: It's all the same, it would be if he had one, and when orders from above dragged him away from her for the hundred and fiftieth time, she'd just get sick of it and leave him for good and all.

BOŽENA: She didn't leave him, she was killed.

GRUBEK: All the better for her. Can't you see that he's like a man from a different planet from yours? And even there, on that other planet, theirs, you could never be happy. Now, Pan Maček, he's a man from your own planet. True, he's not too bold or courageous. Well, and what of it? The war's over, and for the next twenty years courage won't be one of the first essentials for a man. If I wasn't in such an awkward position at the moment I'd offer you my hand and heart myself.

BOŽENA: You?

GRUBEK: Yes, I. I'm not old yet, I'm not ugly, and I've got brains, I assure you. And as for the rest, you'd be content when we were married.

BOŽENA: Oh, keep still!

GRUBEK: You're angry? That's good. That shows that I'm right. Yes, yes, you belong to us, and not to them. Yes, it's just my sort of man that can make a woman like you happy.

BOŽENA: Oh, stop it, I tell you!

GRUBEK: Our life, and not theirs. First class cabins, cars, and yachts. Nice and Biarritz, Naples and Madrid...

BOŽENA: You are only an engineer, aren't you?

GRUBEK: Unfortunately, yes.

BOŽENA: But you talk like the owner of a dozen factories, at least.

FRANTIŠEK (*coming in from verandah*): What are you two arguing about?



GRUBEK: I'm just explaining to Pani Božena some of the advantages of the good old times; which have made us what we are. *(Božena rushes towards the door.)*

FRANTIŠEK: Well, after all, Božena, he's right. There's a lot to be said for the good old order.

BOŽENA *(halting)*: The old order? I'm beginning to think that in these years Pan Grubek hasn't done so badly under the New Order either.

GRUBEK: That is, under the Germans—is that what you're trying to say?

BOŽENA: Yes. Under the Germans.

GRUBEK *(to František, indicating Božena)*: There you are—just what I told you. What I was afraid of in Moravska Ostrava. *(To Božena.)* Why are you in such a hurry to insult a man you actually know nothing about? I suppose I upset you by talking of things you want to forget. You lost your temper. Anger's a blind and ignoble impulse.

*(Božena turns sharply and goes out.)*

GRUBEK: An only girl, and spoiled.

FRANTIŠEK: Poor thing! That camp's shaken her badly ... I myself hardly know her.

GRUBEK: Don't worry, she'll soon be herself again. It's nothing ... *(A pause.)* So four Russians have taken up their quarters in your house.

FRANTIŠEK: Why four?

GRUBEK: The fourth is your own son, Stefan.

FRANTIŠEK: No, you're mistaken. I myself think a lot of Russia ... But I'm a Czech. And Stefan's a Czech, too, No ... No, you're wrong.

*(The verandah door opens, Stefan leads Masha into the sitting-room, supporting her under the arm.)*

GRUBEK: I'm right, my friend.

STEFAN *(coming out of the sitting-room)*: Did you see? She can walk quite well now. *(Picks up cap from table.)*

FRANTIŠEK: Where are you going?

STEFAN: To the Ministry of Defence. Yes, she walks much better now.

FRANTIŠEK: Will you be back soon?

STEFAN *(smiling)*: Much better ... What did you say? Oh, yes, yes, I'll be back soon. *(Exit.)*

GRUBEK: All the same, I'm right, unfortunately.

TIHY *(entering)*: I've come in without knocking, as usual.

FRANTIŠEK: And as usual, just at the right moment.

TIHY: Who's making all that noise out there on the verandah?

GRUBEK: That's the new Europe—the youth.

FRANTIŠEK: And we, three chips of old Europe, will sit here. What a pity we have no beer.

TIHY: And no youth.

GRUBEK: Yes! However much we may have argued and disputed in the past, our years and our grey hair bind us together. But they ... *(Nods towards the verandah.)* I sometimes feel as though

we can't even live in the same room with them. Forgive me, dear František, but really we can't, even though they're your children. They're out there, and we're here.

TIHY: Today I've been tramping the streets of Prague! This old town's gone crazy with joy. Even those who did nothing to free it feel themselves victors, all the same.

GRUBEK: I think there's a shade of irony in your tone?

TIHY: Yes, and no. It's no crime to smile at oneself. I'm glad that my own people are freed, but I'd be still happier if they themselves had done a bit more for their own liberation. We've always faced death like men. We've had the courage to spit in the face of our murderers, but ... we've too seldom killed them. Would you like to hear the verses I have written today about it?

FRANTIŠEK: Come along, let's hear what you've written.

TIHY *(fumbling in his pocket)*: Where are they, then? Of course, I left them at home in my overcoat pocket. Another time.

FRANTIŠEK: Are they good?

TIHY: Well, how shall I say ... Of course, they're not my usual lyrics, they're political poems. But I like them. Yes! I certainly like them! I've taken them to the *Rude Pravo*.

GRUBEK: They're Communists there, aren't they?

TIHY: Yes. And they liked them. They told me of one or two things here and there that needed changing. I took them back home till tomorrow. I think they're right. Now we must be a bit more critical ... I'll do it.

GRUBEK: Well, of course, maybe they really are right. But it may work out, Pan Tihy, that today they tell you: "Do this or that, this is what's needed, today," and the day after, the same. And in the end you'll find yourself writing something quite different from what you intended to at first. You'll be writing what they need, and forgetting what you need.

TIHY: You're a snake.

GRUBEK: What?

TIHY: A snake. I've only realized it just now, when I felt your bite.

GRUBEK: Take that back.

TIHY: I shall do nothing of the sort.

FRANTIŠEK: Shake hands, both of you, at once. Boguslav, you're in my house!

TIHY *(to Grubek)*: Why did you say that to me?

GRUBEK: Simply because I've loved your poems for a long time and I'm worried about you. That's all.

FRANTIŠEK: Shake hands at once. I beg you. It isn't often I ask anything.

TIHY *(pressing Grubek's hand)*: But all the same, remember that I don't agree with you. *(To František.)* Nor with you. Yes, yes, you nodded when he was speaking. I'll be quarrelling with you yet. With both of you.

GRUBEK: Then you'd better go into that other room. There you'll find yourself in agreement with everybody.

TIHY: No, I'm not going into that room.





*Act II. Left to right: D. Ivanov as Stefan, V. Serova as Božena and G. Vodyanitskaya as Masha*

GRUBEK: Well, then, stay here with us.

TIHY: I don't want to stay with you.

GRUBEK: Well, then there's only one thing left—to go home.

TIHY: No, I'll be dull there.

GRUBEK: What do you want, then?

TIHY: I don't know.

FRANTIŠEK: Well, if we go—will that suit you?

TIHY: Yes. I'll sit here in solitude between you and them. This time your idea's a good one.

GRUBEK: And we'll go into your study, František. After all, a father needs one room in the house where he can have some peace when the children start making a noise.

*(They go upstairs.)*

TIHY *(calling after them)*: This house is now like Noah's ark: seven pairs of the pure, seven of the impure. And I? What am I? *(Switches on the wireless, twirls the dials several times.)* How the world's rumbling! How it's shrieking! Groaning! Cursing! Howling, singing!

*(Enter Božena from the verandah. She crosses the room, coming almost up to Tihy.)*

BOŽENA: Pan Tihy, I think I'm in love.

TIHY: Have you been in love a long time?

BOŽENA: For three years.

TIHY: And are you very much in love?

BOŽENA: Hopelessly. At any rate, foolishly ...

TIHY: Why foolishly? Believe me, there's always some sort of sense in love.

BOŽENA: 'On Sunday I shall go away, and we shall probably never see each other again.' And the terrible thing is that he is right. Even in my thoughts I can't see him beside me, because he's from a completely different world. Quite

different ... Or no, I'll put it another way. I stand looking down into the water and see how beings live and swim there. But I cannot go there to them, I should drown. And those that are there cannot come to me, they would suffocate. *(A pause.)* 'On Sunday I'll go away and we shall probably never see each other again.'

TIHY: But why are you telling me all this?

BOŽENA: Forgive me ... Because I've a rotten character. I don't want to be left to suffer alone. If I came to you in a week from now and said: "I don't love you, but if you like you can marry me." Would you?

TIHY: No, I'm afraid I wouldn't.

BOŽENA: But Maček will. And everything will be all right. I'll start studying something new and drop it again. It won't matter — there'll be plenty of money. Yes, yes, that's the way it'll be ... Nice in the summer, Paris in the winter, cars, travelling, the best hotels. And if I go to Spain, it'll only be for the bull-fighting. He's right. Of course, he's right. *(Goes to the doors.)*

TIHY: Who's right?

BOŽENA *(pausing at the doors)*: Pan Grubek.

TIHY: No, he's not right.

BOŽENA: You don't even know what he said.

TIHY: All the same, he's not right.

*(Božena shrugs her shoulders and goes out. Ludwig enters from the verandah.)*

TIHY *(almost shouting)*: Not right!

LUDWIG: Who's not right, Pan Boguslav?

TIHY: Not right! *(Beckons Ludwig to him, cries loudly, directing his voice towards the ceiling.)* I don't know about her, deuce take her, after all, but as for us, no, it's not for the bull-fighting we'll be going to Spain, lad!

*(Curtain)*



## ACT THREE

(*The same. Two days later. Masha and Petrov.*)

MASHA: So that's the whole story of my life.

PETROV: Yes, not such an easy one. Well, after all—you'll have something to remember, since you've come through alive.

MASHA: Yes—the war's over now.

PETROV: The open warfare—yes. You went around Prague with Stefan today?

MASHA: Yes.

PETROV: So you drove through the streets and saw people walking about, all looking more or less the same, wearing more or less the same hats, glasses, gloves. But which of these glasses hide the eyes of a fascist? Which hat covers the head of a man who is thinking how to put everything back the way it was? Which gloves cover hands that would gladly strangle us? You couldn't see that, could you?

MASHA: No.

PETROV: Of course not. You can't see that as you drive around in a car.

MASHA: Ivan Alexeyevich, I know ... but ... today I just drove about ... and enjoyed myself. (*A pause.*)

PETROV: You like Stefan? (*Masha is silent.*) Don't you?

MASHA: I don't know.

PETROV: Why don't you know? Why are you staring at me like that? You know very well. But you're leaving on Sunday, aren't you? Going back home?

MASHA: Ivan Alexeyevich! What shall I do? Tell me. (*A long pause.*) Ivan Alexeyevich, why do you take so long to think?

PETROV: How else? We here, abroad, must be soldiers, and diplomats, and politicians, all at once. And not all of us are so very wise, not all of us are so very cultured, but that doesn't lessen our responsibility. Have you ever thought of that phrase we in Russia so often use, "a politically developed person"? By that we mean a person who, when speaking, always knows what is good for the Soviet Union and what's harmful, what he should say and what not, which words he should choose for us, his friends, and which for his enemies.

MASHA: But I was asking you about myself. My personal affairs.

PETROV: Personal affairs? Nobody can tell you anything about that. Act as your conscience dictates. (*Pause.*) So you think it's only your own affair, a personal matter ... Churchill made a speech yesterday—I heard it over the radio—he laid down his ideals. In his opinion there should be no socialism in the world, because socialism is corruption and disorder. But in my opinion there ought to be socialism on earth, because it spells joy and happiness. So there, you see, the war is over, but as for the future—people have very different views, very different. No, Masha, our generation wasn't born to take things easy.

(*Enter Stefan*)

STEFAN: Well, I'm free now. (*Petrov rises.*) How do you feel?

PETROV (*going upstairs*): All right. On Sunday I shall leave for my new assignment. My eye's still troubling me a little. I'll go and lie down.

MASHA: Ivan Alexeyevich, why are you suddenly going off like that? Stay a little longer, Ivan Alexeyevich!

PETROV (*from the stairs, smiling*): And since when have you started pretending? Eh? (*Exit.*)

STEFAN: You look splendid today, but you are probably still not strong, not quite well?

MASHA: I've quite forgotten my feet. What a lovely town Prague is!

STEFAN: Yes ... Prague ... (*A pause.*)

I haven't been here for six years. Before our first battle, near Kharkov, when we were given tommy-guns, our general—he was only a colonel then—took his, kissed it and said: "Remember, we must take these tommy-guns to Prague." And I remembered it. Russia was no stepmother to me, she was a real mother. But all the same, I could never forget Prague for a single day. I think it must be in my blood.

(*Enter František and Grubek, slightly tipsy.*)

FRANTIŠEK: We've found a cosy little café with wonderful plum brandy. The price is frightful, of course, but who thinks of money when our glorious Prague is free once more, when at last there are no more Germans to be seen in the streets! We're free, free, devil take it! Grand! Everything's grand! But there's one thing I don't like. (*To Stefan.*) Why do people refuse to be brothers, and go about arresting folks who they think were more to blame than others? If I had my way, I wouldn't do it.

STEFAN: Then it's a good thing you haven't your way.

FRANTIŠEK: Oh, I know, I know! Of course, they are to blame, they collaborated with those German swine. But it's just human nature, and I'm ready to forgive them now that there's peace on earth once more! God in heaven! Is this the time to be thinking of arrests and persecution? Stefan, answer me!

STEFAN: Yes, we must think of it, we can't avoid it, we are forced to.

FRANTIŠEK: Your comrades, those who've come back from Russia and those who stayed here—they're not bad fellows but they're all too ruthless, they don't make enough allowance for human weakness. Devil knows what they are! They don't know how to be like Grubek and myself, maybe, at times not so very sensible, but broad-minded and kindly.

STEFAN: We don't want to repeat our mistakes—that sort of history that you



cooked up for us with your broad-mindedness and easy-going ways.

FRANTIŠEK: Easy-going? A sensible man wouldn't have sheltered Russian parachutists ...

STEFAN: Yes, that was good. But Prague is freed, and the Russians have paid it back ten times over. But, Father, don't let's spoil this great day by quarrelling. Let's drop the subject.

FRANTIŠEK: But I want ... to talk.

STEFAN: Father, perhaps you've had a bit too much to drink.

FRANTIŠEK: That's not the way to talk to your father ... Especially as it's the first time in six years.

STEFAN: I'm sorry, of course I shouldn't.

FRANTIŠEK: Let's go upstairs, Jan. To-day's a great day, and I don't want to spoil it by quarrelling with my Russian son. *(They climb the stairs.)*

STEFAN: I'm more of a Czech than you are!

FRANTIŠEK: You?

STEFAN: Yes, I. You think of the Czechia of the past, and I think of the future Czechia.

FRANTIŠEK: Come, Jan. *(To Masha.)* Now you, Maria, you're Russian. You're—a good girl. Why have you Russians taught him to be so stubborn, so relentless, so unforgiving?

STEFAN: It's not the Russians who've taught me that. It's life. Forgive me for saying so, but life hasn't taught you yet.

FRANTIŠEK: Not taught me? One in three of my friends has either died or been killed. We've suffered enough here.

STEFAN: Yes, suffering teaches a great deal, but it doesn't teach everything. There are things that can be learned only in the fight.

FRANTIŠEK: You in Russia weren't the only ones who fought.

STEFAN: Of course not. There are people here, too, who didn't fight only in the last five days, but for the whole six years. And if you ask them, they'll tell you the same thing that I do.

FRANTIŠEK: More fighting! I don't want to hear about it! I'll shut my ears to such talk. I'm fed up with it.

STEFAN: There you are ... That's just the way all Europe stopped its ears before the war. No, we're not going to do that any more.

FRANTIŠEK *(at the door, to Grubek)*: All the same, plum brandy after six years has gone to my head a bit. But not to yours. You're probably making it up, Jan, when you say you haven't tasted it for six years.

*(Both exeunt.)*

STEFAN *(to Masha)*: Father's the best man I know on earth. But even six years of German occupation hasn't shifted him an inch. *(A pause.)* That frock suits you wonderfully. But when you were sitting beside me today I was sorry you weren't wearing my old dressing-gown instead. I'll make you a present of that dressing-gown. Is it all right? Maybe it's silly

to give you such an old rag, but I want you to have it. Will you take it?

MASHA: Yes. I've got fond of it. *(A pause.)*

STEFAN: You're tired ... and as much as I hate to I shall have to send you to bed! *(Takes Masha's arm and leads her slowly across the room.)*

MASHA: It's as though we'd been walking together for a long, long time through the whole town, through Stalingrad, and you have brought me to my own house. We stand on the doorstep, and I have my hand on the door.

STEFAN: And for a long, long time we can't say goodbye, can we?

MASHA *(after a pause)*: Goodbye.

STEFAN: Au revoir. *(Again takes her arm and walks just as slowly with her about the room.)* And to me it's as though you've been living in Prague for a long, long time and we're standing somewhere on Zizka Street, by the entrance to your house.

MASHA: No, we're in Stalingrad.

STEFAN: All right then, let it be in Stalingrad.

MASHA: You'll miss the last tram. Go along. Hurry. Goodbye.

STEFAN *(kissing her hand)*: Au revoir.

MASHA: Au revoir. *(Disappears through the door. Stefan sits down in an armchair by the stove. Enter Božena and Tihy.)*

TIHY: Well, here we are ... I've brought you to your destination. *(Kisses her hand.)*

BOŽENA: Why are you hurrying away? You know very well that you've nowhere special to go.

STEFAN: Where have you been?

TIHY: Pani Božena and I have been for a walk. Wandered around the whole of Prague.

BOŽENA: Tell me, Pan Tihy, am I still good-looking enough to be seen with in the streets of Prague?

TIHY: That's hard for me to judge. I'm too old an admirer of yours.

BOŽENA: And what do you think, Stefan?

STEFAN: Me? I am very happy.

BOŽENA: We're twins, you and I, and if you're happy, then I ought to be happy too.

STEFAN: But aren't you happy? *(Rises.)*

BOŽENA: Where are you going?

STEFAN: I want to go for a walk under our windows.

BOŽENA: Why?

STEFAN: I don't know why but I feel I must ... I've got to walk about under our windows ... As though this were another town, as though they weren't ours. *(Exit.)*

BOŽENA: I wish I could walk about like that. I wish I could ... *(Pause.)* Yes, say what you will, but Prague's still delightful ...

TIHY: Yes, it's been a wonderful evening ... Although to be frank, I couldn't get rid of the feeling that you were sorry to be walking with me, and not with somebody else.

BOŽENA: Why do you say that? You recited such lovely poems for me on the Karlov Bridge. I loved it. It made me feel so good.



TIHY: That's why I recited them. While I was reciting them you found it easier to fancy that it was somebody else with you ...

BOŽENA: Well, if you will have it that way ... yes. But isn't that just a poet's duty?

TIHY: Of course ... And how did I do my duty?

BOŽENA: Delightfully, as usual. (*A pause. Tihy walks over to the staircase.*) Where are you going?

TIHY: I want to try and drag the colonel down.

BOŽENA: What? Yes ... yes, try. (*Left alone, she repeats unconsciously:*) "Try ... try ... What? Nothing?" (*Silence.*)

MAČEK (*entering*): Where have you been? I came here twice.

BOŽENA: I've been wandering about Prague.

MAČEK: With whom?

BOŽENA: With Pan Tihy.

MAČEK (*relieved*): A-a-h!

BOŽENA: You look upset. What's the matter?

MAČEK: Apart from the fact that you don't love me, nothing in particular.

BOŽENA: You've known that for a long time, but all the same, I've seen you looking more cheerful. Tell me what's wrong?

MAČEK: Oh ... nothing much. It's not worth thinking about.

BOŽENA: But what, all the same?

MAČEK: The devil alone knows what's going on in my clinic. Three days ago the wife of one of my assistants returned from camp. Well, of course he couldn't wait and meet her after work, he just dropped everything and went off. Yesterday in the middle of the day five people suddenly put on red armbands and made off to a meeting.

BOŽENA: And didn't return?

MAČEK: Yes, they came back, but only after two hours. I can't work that way. Ribbons, rosettes, badges, newspapers in everyone's hands, and talk, talk, and talk, all the time. Today they shout about politics, tomorrow they'll start saying that I pay them too little or that my clinic's good enough to be taken over by the state.

BOŽENA: Perhaps you really don't pay them enough? You are rather mean, you know.

MAČEK: That's one thing you can't say.

BOŽENA: Well, I've heard it from other people.

MAČEK: I can assure you that all through our life you'll never once be able to reproach me with stinginess. Not you! Other people don't concern you.

BOŽENA: And that life of ours—do you think it will ever be?

MAČEK: Yes. It will. And that's just what I've come about. I'm tired of waiting. Today you're going to say "yes," and when we shall get married?

BOŽENA: I've been wanting to talk to you, too, for the past two days. I'd almost made up my mind to be sensible. But can't I tell you all that tomorrow?

MAČEK: No, today. Don't smile. I've got enough sense to be able to see and understand what's going on. And whatever happens, you will be my wife. You're no longer eighteen. You're twenty-six. You like to live well no less than I do. You're not in love with me, but you can give me my due. I'm tired of telling you that I love you and getting no answer from you. Yes, I love you. And with the life I'll give you, you'll keep your looks till you're fifty. Without me you'll be old at thirty-five. That's too early and I'm sure you'd hate that. All this that you're feeling now—it'll all pass. But I'll still be here. You must say "yes" today.

BOŽENA: But if that word "yes" sticks in my throat? It's your own fault.

MAČEK: Why?

BOŽENA: Ever since I struck that German and you stood there with your hands by your sides, I've been wanting to strike you too. (*A pause.*) And I can't help it.

MAČEK (*gently, taking her hand*): Never mind. You'll forget all that. That's all past. You'll forget it. I'm sure you will. Shake it all off and say "yes."

(*Loud knock at the door.*)

BOŽENA: Come in.

(*Jokiš appears at the door—a tall, thin old man, without a cap, walking with a cane. He takes two uncertain steps forward.*)

JOKIČ: I need Boguslav Tihy. I've been to his house. They took me to you and said that he was here.

BOŽENA (*going up to him*): Yes, he's here. Give me your hand. Just one more step, there now, won't you please sit down, I'll call him. (*From the bottom of the stairs.*) Pan Tihy! Pan Tihy!

TIHY: Coming! (*Comes downstairs with Petrov.*)

BOŽENA: Someone to see you.

TIHY: Who?

JOKIČ: It's me. (*Tihy slowly goes up to him.*) You seem to have grown fat, Boguslav, you're out of breath.

TIHY: Wait a bit ... wait a bit ... who is it?

JOKIČ: It's me—Jokiš. Give me your hand.

(*Tihy stretches out his hand to Jokiš. They stand facing each other.*)

TIHY: Wait a bit, wait a bit ... Why, you were younger than me ... in Madrid ...

JOKIČ: And I'm younger than you, now.

TIHY: No, wait a minute. You were seven years younger.

JOKIČ: And I still am seven years younger now. I'm thirty-eight.

TIHY: No, this is impossible, this is madness. What have they done to you?

JOKIČ: That's a long German story. But later on ... I'm glad I've found you. Remember, you gave me your address?

TIHY: You always had an excellent memory. (*To Petrov.*) In the brigade we used to call him the walking encyclopaedia.

JOKIČ: And since I've become blind I never forget anything. I'm on my way home to Montenegro from a concentration

camp, I'll rest up with you for three days and then go on. I'd like to have a wash. Let's go to your place, shall we?

TIHY: Come along.

BOŽENA: Pan Tihy, let your friend have a wash here. You forget that you've no hot water. Bring him a change of clothes, and I'll get the bath ready.

JOKIČ: Thank you. Boguslav, introduce me. (*Holding Božena's hand, recollecting*): In Casa del Campo, at night, in the trenches in November ... It was raining ... your neighbour ... a girl ... fairhaired ... with green eyes ... You recited poems about her, lamenting that she was too young for you to dare fall in love with her.

BOŽENA: And now I'm too old.

JOKIČ: That's not true. You have a young hand. (*Releases her hand.*) Who else is in the room?

TIHY: Pan Maček.

JOKIČ (*shaking hands with Maček*): Slavka Jokič.

TIHY: Colonel Petrov.

JOKIČ (*holding Petrov's hand*): Russian? You have a strong hand. You're young?

PETROV: I'm thirty-eight.

JOKIČ: And so am I ...

TIHY: And like us, he was in Madrid too.

JOKIČ: When?

PETROV: in '37.

JOKIČ: We were there later, too.

PETROV: I was there until the end, as well. Only not in Madrid.

JOKIČ: Where?

PETROV: Everywhere. At that time my speciality was bridges.

JOKIČ: I understand. Yes?

PETROV: Yes.

TIHY: Well, I'll go and get some clean clothes for you. Pani Božena!

BOŽENA: Yes, yes, I'm coming. (*She goes out, followed by Tihy.*)

JOKIČ: You remember Spain?

PETROV: Yes.

JOKIČ: And I too. That was where I fired my first bullet at the fascists.

PETROV: I too.

JOKIČ: That's something one doesn't forget. Like one's youth. (*A pause.*) Do I look very old?

PETROV: The truth, army style?

JOKIČ: Of course. The mirror can never tell me the truth now. So people should tell me.

PETROV: Sixty.

MAČEK: You haven't shaved for a long time. And you're probably tired.

JOKIČ: Give me your hand. (*Maček gives him his hand and after a moment cries out. Jokič releases the hand.*) Forgive me. (*To Petrov.*) No, we're not tired yet, are we, Comrade Colonel? Not tired. Although to tell the truth, I sometimes feel damned homesick.

PETROV: I once flew to Montenegro. Yours is a fine people, small but indomitable.

JOKIČ: Why small? There are no small peoples. There are peoples that agree to be regarded as small. But we never agreed to it. We Montenegrins even have the saying—how can anybody conquer us, when we and the Russians number two hundred millions.

BOŽENA (*entering*): I've got everything ready. Juli, please help him to the bathroom.

JOKIČ: Thank you, Pani Božena. Boguslav is such a good raconteur that I can almost see you. (*Exit arm in arm with Maček.*)

BOŽENA: His voice is quite young ... Why didn't you tell me that you had been in Spain?

PETROV: The subject didn't come up.

BOŽENA: With you nothing ever comes up. You consider our house a friend's house?

PETROV: Yes.

BOŽENA: Why have you never told your friends anything, not a single word, about your life, about ...

PETROV: About what? There are things that one prefers not to talk about. But somebody's evidently told you ...

BOŽENA: Yes, I heard from ...

PETROV: Don't say who told you. I might get angry, and just now it would be out of place. Yes, you were told the truth. I have lost a great deal in this war and I don't know if I shall ever again get even a part of it back. You feel that's enough to make me an unhappy man. More than once I've noticed you looking at me as though you felt sorry for me. But you're wrong. I'm not unhappy. I have my compensations, something to give my life real meaning. The world's far from being all I would like to see it. And I have the honour and satisfaction of fighting to improve it as long as I live. Well, enough of this. Don't be angry with me. But I don't want to talk about it any more.

BOŽENA: Very well, we won't. (*A pause.*) Shall I sing for you?

MAČEK (*enters*): I had to cut open both his boots. What swine those Germans are.

BOŽENA: Juli, come and sit down at the piano.

MAČEK: Why?

BOŽENA: I'm going to sing. Will you play this? (*Points to the music. Maček strikes a chord.*)

BOŽENA: No, not that. Better this one. (*Holds out the music to Maček. He plays. After a pause Božena sings.*)

Neath the chestnuts of Prague  
You sat by my side;  
From the chestnut trees fell  
The leaves that had died.  
Nought remained but Time's relics,  
Like the leaves that were shed.  
In the yellowed old river  
Fell the words that were said.

(*Suddenly breaking off, to Petrov.*) Why are you so quiet?

PETROV: I'm listening to you.

BOŽENA: No, you don't like that song ... I know. (*To Maček.*) Stop playing ... I'll sing you one of your own—a Russian song. Masha used to sing it to me in the camp ... Juli!

MAČEK: I don't know that song.

BOŽENA: It's quite easy. (*Picks out the accompaniment over his shoulder. Sings. [Maček accompanies her.]*)





you asked. "They aren't," I said, "but their German instructors are. Put a belt in that machine gun." And sure enough, a minute later the attack started, and we stood there in the trench and sang...

TIHY (*singing*):

We were not even born here, it's true,  
And Madrid is a long way from home,  
Yet the hearts in our breasts beat as one,  
And this banner that waves is our own.  
Remember?

JOKIĆ: Could I ever forget? (*Sings.*)

We are few, but if need be, we're many—  
We'll be joined by the dead in one mass—

PETROV (*joining in*):

Where the Seventh Brigade plants its  
standard,  
There the fascists shall die! They'll not  
pass!

BOŽENA: Wait a minute, I'll accompany  
you. (*Goes up to the piano and strikes  
several chords.*) Is that right?

PETROV: A bit lower.

BOŽENA: Is that better?

PETROV: No, lower still. Deeper! When  
you strike those low notes... imagine  
that you're hoarse... the heat of  
battle...

BOŽENA (*striking a chord*): That right?

PETROV: Right. (*Begins singing; the others  
gradually join in.*)

Yes, we left our dear ones behind us,  
Our brides, and our mothers, and friends,  
And we marched half the world round to  
come here,

(*Curtain*)

## ACT FOUR

(*The same. Three days later. Midday. A kitbag s'anding near the door.*)

GRUBEK (*alone, sitting at a chessboard,  
sings*): "Where the Seventh Brigade plants  
its standard, there the fascists shall die!  
They'll not pass!"

LUDWIG (*enters and places a bouquet on the  
table*): Pan Grubek, I have a favour to  
ask you. Please give that bouquet to Masha.  
Her train leaves at two-forty, I shan't  
be able to see her again—I'm on duty for  
twenty-four hours.

GRUBEK: And couldn't you miss duty for  
once in your life?

LUDWIG: Of course not, after all, there's  
such a thing as discipline.

GRUBEK: And what do you do when you're  
on duty?

LUDWIG: Sometimes we simply sit in quar-  
ters. Sometimes we go on patrol. And  
sometimes we're taken as guard when some  
fascist or other is arrested. Excuse me,  
Pan Grubek, I'll be late, I shall have to  
run all the way as it is.

(*Exit Ludwig. Grubek thoughtfully sings  
the same verse again as he goes upstairs.  
Enter Tihy, followed by Jokić.*)

TIHY: Pan Grubek, where's the colonel,  
do you know?

And forward we'll go to the end.

(*Božena accompanies. Grubek, followed by  
František, appears above, looking over  
the bannister.*)

We are few, but if need be, we're many—  
We'll be joined by the dead in one mass—  
Where the Seventh Brigade plants its  
standard,

There the fascists shall die! They'll not  
pass!

(*At the piano, Božena repeats the melody,  
solo.*)

FRANTIŠEK: "Božena!

GRUBEK: Pani Božena!

(*At the sound of his voice, Jokić suddenly  
rises, then seats himself again.*)

BOŽENA (*continues to play*): What's the  
matter?

GRUBEK: When you finish playing that,  
may I have the pleasure of hearing some-  
thing by Wagner?

(*Jokić again turns towards the sound of  
Grubek's voice, and remains motionless.*)

BOŽENA: I've no desire to give you  
pleasure. (*Sharply.*) And I don't mind tell-  
ing that I don't want to give you pleas-  
ure! (*Strikes chords again, one after the  
other. She plays with a will louder and  
louder. Sings alone.*)

Where the Seventh Brigade plants its  
standard,

There the fascists shall die! They'll not  
pass!

GRUBEK (*from top of stairs*): I believe he  
intended to drive about Prague this morn-  
ing. When I woke up the house was  
empty, everybody had gone out, even  
František.

TIHY: The colonel's going today. He pro-  
mised to take Jokić with him as far as  
Bratislav.

GRUBEK: Then you'd better wait. (*Exit.*)

TIHY: And how'll you get from Bratislav  
to Belgrade? Eh, Jokić, what's the matter,  
can't you hear me?

JOKIĆ: Wait a moment...

TIHY: What's the matter?

JOKIĆ: Now where have I heard that voice  
before?

TIHY: Whose voice?

JOKIĆ: The voice of that man whom you  
call "Pan Grubek."

TIHY: Call him? What d'you mean, call  
him? That's his name.

JOKIĆ: I've never heard that name before,  
but that voice?.. Where? When?.. I  
don't know. Wait a moment.. No,  
it wasn't in Dachau. No. (*A pause*). In  
Swinemünde! No, not in Swinemünde.  
(*A pause*). No... no... (*Suddenly.*)



Only ... then he spoke German ... Auschwitz? Auschwitz? Auschwitz ...

TIHY: Well, 'come along ... why d'you keep on worrying, and all over nothing?

JOKIČ: Auschwitz ... (Seizes Tihy's arm and gesticulates feverishly, asking him to call Grubek). Get him here, quick! Get him here! (Stands in the attitude of a man listening with the utmost intentness.) Hurry!

TIHY (shrugging his shoulders): All right, if you wish. (Calling.) Pan Grubek! We're leaving. I'll open my window. Tell them to call me when they come.

GRUBEK (on the stairs): As you like. But they ought to be here any minute now. It'll soon be one o'clock. And at two-forty Pani Maria leaves for Moravska Ostrava. (Exit.)

JOKIČ: Moravska Ostrava?.. Moravska Ostrava?

TIHY: Come on, we'll sit in my place. Jokič!

JOKIČ (absent-mindedly): All right. Moravska Ostrava ...

(Exeunt. After a short pause enter František, Božena and Petrov.)

FRANTIŠEK: I'll just change and come back at once. (Goes upstairs.)

BOŽENA: Well, I took you all over Prague, even though it was for the last time.

PETROV: I'm very grateful to you.

GONCHARENKO (enters): Comrade Colonel.

PETROV: Have you brought it? (Goncharenko goes out and returns with a parachute envelope.) Put it down. You can go. (Exit Goncharenko.)

BOŽENA: What's that?

PETROV: An army parachute in its envelope. It's like the one I used when I baled out two kilometres from your house. It's for your father, to remember that people sometimes drop out of the clouds, and that ... (looks at Božena) three years ago a man was sitting in your cellar, all the time waiting ... for two raps on the ceiling, which meant that you were coming, and bringing me bread and coffee ...

BOŽENA: You haven't forgotten it?

PETROV: No, although you've never once reminded me of it.

BOŽENA (lifting the envelope): It's heavy. Have you made many jumps?

PETROV: Among us paratroops, people usually don't ask how many jumps we've made, but where they've been. No, I haven't made many. Five. But to make up for that, sometimes a long way from home. When Hitler was near Moscow, I was near Berlin.

BOŽENA: And you'll never land in Prague again?

PETROV: Bale out here? Why? There'll be a direct train Moscow—Prague, Prague—Moscow. That's not for me. Not for me, Pani Božena... The life I've chosen allows me very little time at my own disposal. I chose it and I love it. Sometimes it has its drawbacks, of course, not everything in life turns out the way one would like ...

FRANTIŠEK (comes downstairs in house jacket): Where are Stefan and Pani Maria? The train is leaving in an hour.

BOŽENA: Father, here's a present for you.

FRANTIŠEK: A present? For me? Where?

PETROV: Here it is. (Puts the envelope on the table.)

FRANTIŠEK: What's that?

PETROV: A parachute. Inscribed. Read it.

FRANTIŠEK (reads inscription on copper plate fastened to envelope): "To Pan František Prohazka, Doctor of Medicine, who sheltered Russian parachutists. In gratitude from one of them. 1942—1945." I understand you, Pan Colonel. That's a reminder that there's another life outside my laboratory, one in which I once took some small part. You're a clever man. You're a very clever man, Comrade Colonel. And that's what I like about you. I'll put it in my study and brag about it to my colleagues and pupils. Grubek! Jan!

GRUBEK (appears at top of landing): What is it?

FRANTIŠEK: Look at the present I've got!

GRUBEK: Ah ... a parachute. (Descends, reads the inscription.) "... Doctor of Medicine, who sheltered ... 42—45." (To Petrov.) So you're going today?

PETROV: Yes, at four o'clock.

FRANTIŠEK: Why don't you wait till tomorrow?

PETROV: I can't. There's a whole column of us going. The cars will be passing your house. They'll sound a horn, and I'll join them.

(Stefan and Masha run in.)

BOŽENA: Where have you been? There's only forty-five minutes left before your train goes!

MASHA: I've got everything ready. I wanted to wait till the very last moment. We've had such a lovely drive.

STEFAN: I can't even see her off. In half an hour I've got to be at the Ministry.

BOŽENA: I'll see her off.

FRANTIŠEK: Well, Pani Maria ...

STEFAN (interrupts): Wait a minute, wait a minute all of you. (To Masha.) I said nothing until the very last moment. But now here are my father and my sister, and I want them to hear me. I'm sorry that my mother isn't here, she'd understand me. Don't go away. I ... I love you. Terribly. Stay here with me. If you ... but you've got nobody left. We'll find your mother ... If she's alive, we'll go to her together ... No, please don't interrupt me. With me you'll never feel that you're in a foreign land, if you stay here. I don't know how I shall live without you ... Say something, Masha ...

(Masha takes a step towards him, puts her arms round his neck and hides her face on his chest. Silence.)

MASHA (tears herself away from Stefan, speaking to Petrov through her tears): Ivan Alexeyevich, if you only knew how happy I am ... Božena! (Turns to Stefan, suddenly speaking almost calmly.) I do love you so ... (Catches his glance at her kitbag.) No, no ... No, I'm going now. I've got to go back home. Maybe there'll be nobody there. But why can't you understand? Maybe everything's burned down ...

Maybe I won't find anything. But can't you understand ... I've got to see it all again. I just can't help it. Don't look at me like that. It's the truth.

STEFAN: What's going to happen, then?

MASHA: I don't know. I'm going. (A long pause.) And what then?

STEFAN: I'll join you in the Soviet Union.

MASHA: When?

STEFAN: I don't know. Perhaps I shall come to study. Perhaps ... I don't know, but I shall come to you. And you'll be my wife. Will you?

MASHA: Yes ... I will.

STEFAN: I'll go with you as far as the car. (A general movement.) No, I'll go alone. I want to say goodbye to her alone and then all of you can come.

(Exit with Masha, his arm round her shoulders. General silence.)

BOŽENA: How hard it is to say goodbye ...

STEFAN (enters): She's in the car, go to her now. Father, take her things with you, please. I just can't go back there. (Clasps his head with his hands, goes out onto the verandah and at its far end presses his face against the window.)

GRUBEK (to František, taking up the bouquet from the table): Wait a moment, I want to say goodbye to her too. (Exit with František.)

BOŽENA (stopping Pe'rov at the door): That man ... he's lying all the time. He hates you, Masha, Stefan—he hates you all, I know it.

PETROV: And what else do you know?

BOŽENA: Nothing more. I simply know that he's lying all the time.

PETROV: I've felt that too. I thought you know something more about him. Well, never mind. Thank you. Come along, or else she'll be late.

(Exeunt. For some seconds the stage is empty. Enter Grubek, mounts the stairs and goes to his own room. František returns. Stefan enters from the verandah and makes for the door.)

FRANTIŠEK: Wait a minute.

STEFAN: I've got to go to the Ministry.

FRANTIŠEK: Never mind, just wait a minute. Stefan! Do you love your country less than she does her Russia?

STEFAN: It's not just Russia she's going to, it's the Soviet Union.

FRANTIŠEK: Stefan! And will you go there too?

STEFAN: There's one thing I know. Either there or here, we shall be together. But most of all I want to bring her here. I want my Czechoslovakia some day to be for her a second homeland as the Soviet Union is for me.

FRANTIŠEK: The doors of my house will always be open to your wife. But if you go ... No, that's enough. I can't talk to you about it any more. (Goes upstairs and disappears.)

PETROV (enters): What's the matter?

STEFAN: Father. We've just had a rather serious talk ...

PETROV: I can guess. But all the same he's a fine old man. And your sister ... There are two worlds fighting inside her. A strong

hand can swing her one way or the other. Be an elder brother to her, although you're twins. Look after her. Though for that matter, why do I tell you all that? Must be old habit, from the time when I was your instructor. Well, time to say goodbye. Give me your hand.

STEFAN (shakes hands): Will we meet again?

PETROV: Who knows? Well, goodbye.

(Exit Stefan, Petrov looks after him for a long time. Speaks to himself, thoughtfully.) Who knows?

TIHY (entering): You're alone?

PETROV: As you see.

TIHY (excited): Jokič has remembered! He's remembered! Last year he was working at a Faustpatrone factory in Moravska Ostrava. The chief engineer there was a traitor called Hoffmann. Jokič remembered his voice, and it's Grubek's voice. He sent me to tell you.

PETROV: Calm down for a moment. František has known Grubek for thirty years; and always as Grubek. (Thinking.) As Grubek ...

TIHY: I told Jokič that. He doesn't know how to account for it, but he swears that Grubek and Hoffmann are one and the same, the same voice. We must ... But colonel, you're leaving, aren't you?

PETROV: Yes, in an hour.

TIHY: What's to be done, then?

PETROV: Never mind, I'll think it over and decide what to do. And you come here with Jokič at five minutes to four.

TIHY: Jokič isn't going with you. He's nearly had a stroke, he's prostrate.

PETROV: Well, come alone, then ... And when you go out, would you mind sending in my chauffeur, if it isn't too much trouble.

TIHY: Yes ... all right ... (Exit. Petrov sits down at the table and writes a note.)

GONCHARENKO (enters): Yes, Comrade Colonel?

PETROV (continues to write): Sit down. Our suspicions were right. I told our people to keep an eye on him, it's true, but now urgent measures have to be taken. Let the Czechs themselves arrest him. It'll be a useful lesson for them. (Hands over the note.) Take the car and go to the nearest headquarters of the People's Guard. Go now. Just a moment. Did you make sure again whether he's noticed anything or not?

GONCHARENKO: Yes, today, when he was in the bathroom. He hasn't noticed.

PETROV: Very well. You may go.

GONCHARENKO (at the door): But he's cunning. You don't catch on to him easily.

BOŽENA (enters): Well, I've seen her off.

PETROV (looks at her): Is it raining?

BOŽENA: Yes, it started quite suddenly. I don't think it'll last long.

PETROV: You'd better change or you'll catch cold. Did you walk back?

BOŽENA: Yes. I sent the car away. I love to walk in the rain. Alone. It's wonderful. And now the chestnuts are all wet and the leaves heavy with raindrops. Everything smells of spring, better than ever before! "On Sunday I shall go away and we shall probably never see each other again." That's how you like to talk, isn't it?



PETROV: I don't like to talk that way. But I'm just used to speaking the truth, that's all. But all the same ... it may be ... sometime ...

BOŽENA (*interrupts*): We shall see each other again? Yes?

PETROV: Yes. It may be ...

BOŽENA: No, it can never be, and it won't be. Don't retreat from your own strict rule of speaking the truth. It cannot be. And it won't be. (*Looks long and intently at Petrov and suddenly begins to sing, for Petrov alone, almost talking to him.*)

Wherefore art thou bowing,  
Rowan tree so lithesome?  
Bending low and lower,  
Bowling, yet not blithesome?

There across the roadway  
Standing in lone state  
There beyond the river  
Stands an oak sedate.

"Might I, a lonely rowan,  
Come sturdy oak to thee,  
Then I'd not stand mournful,  
A wistful rowan tree.

"Gently would my branches  
Close to thee be pressing,  
To thy leaves I'd whisper,  
Day and night caressing."

Vainly does the rowan  
Seek the oak to marry.  
She, a lonesome orphan,  
All alone must tarry ...

(*After a silence.*) Well, now I've told you everything! (*Exit swiftly.*)

PETROV (*alone, after a long silence*): Everything ... (*For some seconds stands in silence, then suddenly goes out of the other door. The stage is empty. Ludwig enters from the outer door, accompanied by an Officer of the People's Guard and two Guards.*)

LUDWIG: Pan Ensign, I myself offered to come here, but now I have a request to make of you.

OFFICER: Well?

LUDWIG: That it shouldn't happen in my father's house. I don't want to disgrace our home. That man is upstairs. I'll go to him myself. I'll say that Father wants him out in the garden. Or something of that sort. We'll leave the house together, and you'll arrest him there, in the street. Please, I beg you.

OFFICER (*hesitates*): Well, all right then. We'll wait out there. (*Exit together with guards. Ludwig quickly runs up the stairs and disappears. A moment later Petrov comes down. He places his cap, satchel and mauser on the table. Sits down in the armchair near the stairs. A noise from above, as though furniture is being moved. Petrov listens for a second, then the noise ceases. Another few seconds' silence, then a door closes above and Grubek in his hat slowly comes downstairs. Petrov, who is sitting with his back to Grubek, turns his head.*)

PETROV: Where are you going, Pan Grubek?

GRUBEK: I'm taking a walk.

PETROV: It's raining, come and sit here with me.

GRUBEK: With pleasure. (*Sits down. A long silence.*) Still, I think I'll go out for a breath of air all the same. I've had a rotten headache all day. (*Goes to the door.*)

PETROV: And I wanted to ask you ...

GRUBEK: What?

PETROV (*again turning his back on Grubek and absent-mindedly rummaging in his satchel*): I wanted to ask you where your other name came from?

GRUBEK (*sending a swift glance round the room. Petrov continues to sit with his back turned to him*): I don't understand. What other name? (*His right hand disappears in his jacket pocket.*)

PETROV (*without turning*): Yours. Hoffmann.

Did you just think it up, or is it by any chance your mother's maiden name?

GRUBEK (*unhurriedly, takes out his revolver*): Yes, it's my mother's name.

(*As he speaks, Tihy appears in the doorway behind Grubek. A short pause. Tihy, with a lightness unusual for such a heavy man, makes a leap and seizes Grubek's arm.*)

PETROV (*turning the armchair*): Pan Tihy. Let him go.

TIHY (*gasping*): Let him go? Him?

PETROV: Let him go. Let him go. His revolver's been emptied for a week.

(*Tihy releases Grubek, who carefully examines the magazine.*)

PETROV: Well? Are you satisfied?

GRUBEK: Yes.

PETROV: Then drop it ... You hear what I tell you?

(*Grubek drops the revolver. A long pause.*)

PETROV: They'll be coming for you now, if I were you I'd sit down.

GRUBEK: I prefer to stand.

GONCHARENKO (*enters*): Comrade Colonel! It's four o'clock. The cars will be here any moment now.

PETROV: Very good, I know ... (*Exit Goncharenko. Petrov shouts.*) Pan Prohazka, Pan Prohazka!

FRANTIŠEK (*appears above*): What, are you ready to go?

PETROV: Yes. Come down. First of all, I want to say goodbye to you, and secondly, before I leave I want to introduce you to ... (*Points to Grubek.*)

FRANTIŠEK (*taking it for a joke, smiling*): What, to Grubek?

PETROV: No, to Hoffmann.

FRANTIŠEK: What's that? What's that you're saying?

PETROV (*pointing to Grubek*): Herr Hoffman. The chief engineer at the Faustpatrone factory in Moravska Ostrava. What else? Fascist. What else? Your guest. What else? The rest he can explain to you himself.

FRANTIŠEK: Jan! Wait a bit! Jan! What's all this? No, what does it all mean?

GRUBEK: Don't ask silly questions.

PETROV: He's right, Pan Prohazka, don't ask him any questions. Only tell me one thing—wasn't his mother's name Hoffmann?

FRANTIŠEK (*confused*): I don't remember.  
GRUBEK (*sharply*): I've already answered you—Hoffmann! Hoffmann! My mother's father was the Sudeten German Hoffmann. Anything else?

FRANTIŠEK (*still more confused*): Hoffmann?... I don't understand. I don't remember. In his home they never talked anything but Czech. His father lectured on Czech literature at the Prague university. Jan! Jan! We were in the same fraternity, the Czech fraternity in Paris! Pan Colonel! No, no, he's a Czech, a Czech by language ... by blood ...

PETROV: Blood?... His blood's fascist, Pan Prohazka ...

(*The loud sound of a motor horn.*)

GONCHARENKO (*enters*): Comrade Colonel, the cars are here. The general is expecting you.

PETROV: Right away. (*Exit Goncharenko.*)  
(*To František, continuing the phrase he had begun*): ... Czech fascist, if you like. No worse and no better than any other. Well ... (*A pause.*)

FRANTIŠEK: Jan! You've deceived me? You ... (*His face changing, in an unexpectedly icy voice.*) Pan Grubek, if you don't want me to strike you, leave my house at once! (*Makes way for Grubek, turns his back to him and repeats:*) Leave my house!

GRUBEK (*calmly continues to sit in the armchair, then turns to Petrov with a mocking smile, points to František and makes a gesture as though to say:* "There, you see, he still understands nothing," and after a pause speaks to Petrov): I'm tired of this senile chatter. Perhaps you really will take me away from here.

TIHY (*banging his fist on the table*): Be quiet! (*Measures Grubek with a long look, then turning to Petrov.*) Is it really possible that they could ever return? Eh?

PETROV: Return? (*Nodding towards Grubek.*) They? It's not for that that millions of dead are buried in European soil. Not for that. No. Goodbye, Pan Prohazka. (*Shakes hands with František.*)

FRANTIŠEK: And Božena?

PETROV: I've already said goodbye to her. (*Goes up to Tihy.*) Goodbye, Pan Tihy.

TIHY: Wait a bit. (*Pointing at Grubek.*) And how about him?...

PETROV: I'm not a permanent guest in this house any more than we're permanent guests in your country. It's very simple, Pan Tihy. You're a Czech and an old soldier. I'll leave this house to you. (*Goes to the door.*) I'll leave this house to you with an easy mind, because ... You remember how the old song goes ... 'Where the Seventh Brigade plants its standard ...' How does it go?

TIHY: 'There the fascists shall die! They'll not pass!'

PETROV (*smiling, already at the door*): Exactly. (*Disappears. A long silence. The sound of a departing car.*)

FRANTIŠEK (*turning to Grubek, furiously*): Get out of my house!

TIHY: No. He won't go.

FRANTIŠEK: Why?

TIHY: Because he's under arrest.

GRUBEK: By whom?

TIHY: By me.

(*Enter the Officer and the People's Guards.*)

TIHY (*pointing to Grubek*): There he is.

OFFICER: And where's Prohazka?

FRANTIŠEK: I'm Prohazka.

OFFICER: No, where's your son, Ludwig Prohazka?

FRANTIŠEK: He's not been home, he's been away since morning.

OFFICER: Away? How ... Wait a minute ..

(*Turning to Grubek.*) Where is he?

GRUBEK (*calmly, pointing upwards*): There.

(*The Officer, one of the People's Guards and František run up the stairs and disappear through the door of Grubek's room. A heart-rending shriek. At the sound Božena dashes out and runs along by the balustrade from her own room to Grubek's. For a moment everybody's attention is distracted from Grubek, who takes a tablet from his waistcoat pocket, chews it, then, leaning against the wall, his outflung arms clutching the top of the panelling, stands in silence, his face contorted. František appears above, on the stairs, stumbling. His eyes are fixed on Grubek. From there the Officer and People's Guards carry the motionless body of Ludwig, head foremost. Božena follows, petrified. František retreats before them. A sound comes from him, not so much a cry or a whimper as a dreadful, monotonous groan. He descends the stairs backwards, sits down automatically in an armchair and stretches out his arms towards the body of his son. The People's Guards lay Ludwig in his arms.*)

TIHY: My God ... Ludwig!

(*František sits motionless. Božena kneels down, embraces Ludwig's head and remains motionless. A long silence.*)

FRANTIŠEK (*not understanding anything, unconsciously speaking to his son*): What's this? What? You don't say anything? Why don't you speak? Eh? (*To Božena, in surprise.*) He doesn't say anything ... (*To Tihy.*) Why is he so silent?

TIHY (*making a gesture with both hands as though to stop everything going on. Speaks quietly at first, then more and more loudly*): No, he is not silent. He is not silent! He is not silent, I tell you!

(*Roused from his immobility by Tihy's shout, František first raises his eyes to Grubek, standing by the wall opposite him, then sharply, wrathfully rises and goes towards him, carrying the body of his son. At that moment the dead fingers release the edge of the panelling, and Grubek falls head first at František's feet.*)

(*Curtain*)

Translated by Eve Manning



## PEOPLE WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

*(Excerpts from the book)*

As far as I am concerned, the war began on the roofs of the Kiev Film Studio where Ukrainian producers made so many fine pictures. The grounds covered several dozen acres planted with fruit trees in the middle of which was a red and yellow brick building, with a tower at each of the four corners. This was the studio where I directed my productions.

On the fourth day of the war I was fire-watching on one of the towers when the first batch of some twenty black enemy aircraft flew over the studio. That was Wednesday, the 25th of June at nine in the morning. The bombers were on their way to bomb an aircraft factory not far from the studio. I was not very well versed in military knowledge and I did not know that if a bomb was released directly over my head it would certainly not hit me. The bombs that the Germans intended for the aircraft factory were thrown right over my head. There was a telephone at my post on the tower and I rang up the command post and shouted something heroic like "I die but will not surrender" and then dropped face down on the ground to await death.

I suppose that at that time I quite seriously believed, like many other misguided souls, that the war depended to a considerable extent on my fire-watcher's post.

My war adventures continued at Poltava, on the football field where the 264th Infantry Division was being hastily formed. Towards the end of June a crazy sort of a train took us on a ten-hour journey from Poltava and at dawn disgorged us at the station of Leplyava, lost amongst the sands of the left bank of the Dnieper some few kilometres east of Kanev.

We were wearing brand new blouses. At the station we were issued semi-automatic rifles glistening with grease and oil. When I left the train I felt for the first time that the front was nearby; German hornets were flying high above my head but I did not recognize them at the time although I was heartily fed up with them by the time the war ended. A day later, weighed down by rolled great-coats, worn bandolier fashion, grenades, and messtins we crossed the Dnieper and some twenty kilometres westward passed through the village of Stepanyts to the front line. We made a forced march which sometimes developed into a run. My army breeches, supported by a webbing belt, would not stay put on my stomach and kept slipping down, the coat unrolled and rubbed the skin off my neck, the messtin banged all the time against my rifle and the sweat poured down my face. Ahead of us the guns roared loudly, mortar bombs were bursting and machine-guns were engaged in duels. I had rubbed the skin off my feet and they hurt, there was a lump in my throat and I felt I was choking with anger.

Behind me were pictures of the evacuation of Kiev and other Ukrainian towns against which the Hitlerites had directed the blows of their aircraft and mechanized forces.

Our division occupied a six-kilometre stretch of the front covering an important road. I began my military career as second in command of a platoon. Actually I began with a much higher post—Regimental Quartermaster. I held this high rank for no more than two hours, however—that was while we were still on the Poltava football field.

Colonel Makarov, a brave soldier, formed his regiment swiftly and resolutely; he fell in all his officers and there on the spot appointed them—you will command such and such a company, you another, and so on; he came to a halt when he had to find a Regimental Quartermaster. For some reason he was convinced that anybody could command a unit but that only a man with an education could be a quartermaster.

After he had appointed everybody to his command he again fell in the officers and questioned them concerning their education. He discovered that I had been graduated from the Theatrical Institute and then from the Cinema Academy and was not a bit put out by the fact that neither of these institutions had anything whatsoever to do with either military or economic affairs. He immediately decided that I was a find for the regiment and would be its quartermaster. Straight away the colonel told me to draw herrings for the whole regiment—82 grams of herring per head and 982 men in the regiment. I received 682 herrings. We tore down some palings from a nearby fence and laid the herrings out on them. There they lay before me like soldiers on parade, rows of glistening evil fish and I stood racking my brain trying to find a just way of dividing them. If we weighed out 82 grams of herring per man we were faced with the problem of how to distribute the heads and tails. One or the other had to be cut off every portion. Some soldiers would get the tasty parts of the fish, the others nothing but heads and tails. To cut the story short I was immediately removed from the post of Regimental Quartermaster. The Regimental commander wanted to send me back into the interior of the country, so angry was he at my inefficiency as quartermaster.

"What am I going to do with you? Do you know anything about the army? Have you ever served?"

"Yes," I answered, crestfallen, "as a drummer."

The commander waved his hands helplessly. A day later, somewhat shyly and grumbling, to show his dissatisfaction, he appointed me assistant to a platoon commander.

Some three years later, when I was already in command of a partisan division, we were

sitting one evening when I told the partisans about my first army problem, the sharing out of the herrings. Sasha Siebergleit, my Quartermaster General, looked at me disdainfully:

"Ay, yai, yai, Comrade General," he said, "what did you do that for? You should have given each man half a herring with a head or a tail and kept one or two hundred portions in reserve..."

And then and there I realized that I was not born to be a quartermaster.

But let us get back to the village of Stepantsy, three hundred yards from which the 264th Division, still unknown to fame, had taken up its position in a beet field.

At dawn on the 2nd of August, 1941, we began digging trenches, some of which had been begun by our predecessors. We had arrived at Stepantsy the night before and, as was the custom before going into battle, we were sent in small groups into a garden where we took the oath of allegiance which the Political Instructor read to us in a tired voice.

I was terribly upset when, forgetting that I had my rifle in my left hand, I saluted him, a thing that, of course, I should not have done while I was holding a rifle.

"E-e-eh, Comrade Assistant Platoon Commander!" exclaimed the Political Instructor shaking his head reproachfully.

During those early days I was doomed to blush on many occasions on account of my civilian mistakes.

It seemed as though the Germans were watching us, for no sooner had we deployed into position and dug our trenches than their artillery preparation began. I must admit that I could not stand it. I got out of my foxhole and found myself in the middle of a field, apparently selecting my "command post" somewhere nearer the village.

In the life of every soldier comes a moment of crisis when his fate in war is decided: will he act as a coward, as a reckless daredevil, or simply as an honest man.

This crisis came to me in my first battle.

While walking on my way to the Command Post along the wide road that ran through the beet fields and moving faster the farther I went, I saw in a deep and very narrow trench the already well-known head of the Political Instructor.

"E-e-eh, Comrade Assistant Platoon Commander! I had counted more on you than on anybody else. You are an educated man!"

At that moment the enemy mortar batteries again opened a running fire, softening up our front lines. I was in a ditch that the collective farmers had dug. I remember that it was very difficult for me to squeeze my belly into that narrow trench. But somehow I squeezed into it. About ten minutes later the Germans attacked. Tommy-gunners began to move around our flank.

"The Platoon Commander's killed!" howled one of the men.

I realized then that my place was with the platoon but saw that at the moment the platoon had left its position and was scampering back across the beet field, hell for leather.

Then it was that I saw my first German. A tommy-gun burst passed close by me.

Explosive bullets splattered beside me on the beet leaves. The German, a young fellow, in a home-made camouflage costume consisting of beet leaves, fixed to a groundsheet, was crawling towards me, tommy-gun in hand. Apparently he was holding a spare drum for the gun between his teeth. At the time I thought it was a dagger or some other rightful weapon. The German, however, had not noticed me. He began firing on our fleeing platoon and I saw two or three men drop. I looked towards the place where the Political Instructor should have been but could not see him. Suddenly the idea came to me: "At the front you must not run away! Even when you retreat you must keep your face to the enemy!" Right in front of my eyes one single tommy-gun was shooting at a whole platoon of backs. When the German was only a few paces from me I remembered that I was now commander of the platoon, as my chief had been killed.

In battle there are times when things become hazy. I must admit that in the hundreds of fights which took place after this I always experienced the same feeling. This was my first battle and I do not remember what happened to me next. All I remember is that the German tommy-gunner lay dead on the ground and that I was standing near him. Even now I am not quite sure that it was I who killed him. I only began to realize what was happening when the German was dead. I took his



*Major General Vershigora  
with his son*



tommy-gun — my first booty — ran after the platoon and compelled the men to obey me. I ordered them to lie down, fire back at the Germans, get up, withdraw, then lie down again and fire. All this probably did not last more than the few minutes we needed to run the hundred and fifty metres and occupy the trenches that were on the outskirts of the village.

We sat in the trenches and engaged in the tiring monotonous form of defence known as exchange of fire.

What else do I remember about that first battle? There were some men on the beet field, their hands held up, moving towards German machine-gunners who had also risen from the ground and were advancing to meet them. They rapidly approached each other. There was only one German for his number two gunner was somewhere far behind him. Matters decided themselves. I gave the order to fire and the platoon, now fully subordinated to my command, fired a single volley from several light machine-guns and rifles, bringing down those who were about to surrender and those who were coming to get their prisoners.

That was the end of my first battle. Night fell. I posted sentries and observers. The men who were not on duty dropped from sheer exhaustion and slept. I could not get to sleep and that night I realized that a soldier at the front must never show the enemy his back. When a soldier shows his back it gives the enemy confidence in victory and a fine target to aim at. The next morning I talked this over with the men and in the daily battles which followed I saw that they had taken my words to heart...

That was on the night of August 2nd, 1941.

The same night, in Moscow, to the roar of A. A. guns warding off a German air raid, my son Evgeni was born.

My wound was a light one, I soon recovered my strength and a month later I was ordered to the headquarters of the South-Western Front to join a company of reserve officers.

We numbered several hundred officers, ranging from major down to junior lieutenant whose clothes still smelt of the hospital and whose revolver holsters were still empty. We were at a place not far from Priluki. A few days after I had been posted to the reserve company I learned that it and part of the headquarters of the South-Western Front were surrounded by the enemy. The Germans dropped paratroops while we were on the way to the town of Lubny. While we were fighting the paratroops, panic broke out in the town and people began running in all directions. I caught a runaway saddled horse, a comrade of mine caught another. We turned from the main road and made our way along lanes to a Machine and Tractor Station some two kilometres from the town. We rode as far as a level crossing on the railway that had been badly bombed by the Germans. Towards evening we again returned to the town — our path of retreat was cut off.

The townspeople had taken to their cellars and there was nobody to ask whether there were Germans in the town or not. We walked

the horses along the pavement, their hoofs ringing loudly on the stones. We rode to the end of the street which led onto a square and there saw German tanks. They were bivouacked for the night in the centre of the square. We stood still for a moment watching them. A rocket bursting in the sky frightened our horses and they galloped back.

Our wanderings within the German encirclement began.

From the direction of the little Ukrainian town of Orzhitsa, well remembered by many who fought in the Ukraine in 1941, came large numbers of Red Army officers and men, sometimes whole columns of them, marching towards Lubny which was occupied by the Germans. Other crowds and trucks were moving in the opposite direction, from Lubny to Orzhitsa.

The officers and men who were encircled there provided the enemy with a weapon more dangerous than tommy-guns, machine guns and tanks — *time*.

I think it must have been then that I acquired what is a most valuable quality in a commander — the ability to develop a sceptical attitude towards any situation in which fate might place me. Perhaps it was my profession which helped me for it makes people either shallow-minded or efficient, with a critical attitude towards themselves and their work.

I came to the following conclusion: either one must get out of the encirclement at once or not at all. The horses helped my comrade and me, they carried us some fifty of sixty kilometres on the first day of our break-away from the encirclement. Then that accursed deep stream, the Sula, crossed our path and the horses did not want to enter it. The Sula is a swampy river with steep banks and calm but evil-looking water. Beyond the river were deserted villages and beyond them either captivity or death. There had been a bridge across the Sula but the "Junkers" had destroyed it. I sat on my tired horse and thought: "Go right you lose your head, go left you lose your honour, go straight ahead and you lose your horse..."<sup>1</sup> I chose the third way.

Pressing the hand of the Ukrainian collective farmer who had just given me a good dinner I presented him with my horse. He led the animal away to a shed, taking the saddle off as he went.

German tanks were entering the village from the other end.

It soon grew dark and without any further adventures we crossed the river in a boat and reached the station of Sencha. Rockets of various colours whistled through the air. Some of them hung in the air so long that I was astounded. We crossed the railway line on our bellies and approached the village of Klyushnikovka; by "we" I mean myself, my comrade and seven Red Army men who had joined us the evening before. Two of them were truck drivers, one was a paratrooper and I don't know what units the remainder belonged to. The arms carried by the seven amounted to two Russian rifles, one Polish rifle and two German clapper grenades.

<sup>1</sup> From the Bylini or Russian folk tales.

We entered Klyushnikovka by crossing the surrounding vegetable gardens. The first cottage was empty with its doors open, nobody answered at the second, but the door of the third was opened by a woman.

"Where are you boys going? There are so many Germans in the village..."

"How many are there?" I asked.

"There must be about ten tanks and more than a hundred motor-cyclists..."

"Which way should we go?" I wanted to know.

"Perhaps along the Gadyach Road, maybe you'll get through. Our troops went that way yesterday."

Gadyach Road... As we turned back through the gardens and walked past the dead sunflowers beside the lane, I kept trying to remember "Gadyach Road... Gadyach Road... Where had I heard of it before?" I could not for the life of me remember. All I knew was that our ancestors from Zaporozhye used this road, that Bogdan Khmelnytsky's regiments marched down the Gadyach Road...

As we reached the road we heard the roar of a German tank engine ahead of us. We scrambled back amongst the sunflowers. The tank drove backwards and forwards along the road, lit up the fields and itself with a bunch of rockets, turned round and fired a few bursts from a machine-gun. Then the hatch closed and the driver apparently went to sleep for half an hour only to wake up later and again light up the locality...

Crossing the road during one of these pauses we found ourselves in an open field covered with straw from a combine that had reaped the field a few days before.

We noticed that many of the piles of straw were moving. Standing near one of them we heard whispering. Several men crawled out from the pile of straw and informed us that there was no place to go, the Germans were everywhere and we were surrounded. As we advanced farther we saw from the light of the rockets that the Germans were indeed all round us. We studied the sequence in which the rockets were fired, selected a moment between two of them, reached the line of the rocket men, crawled through the high stubble left by the combine, lay dead still at the moment when the rockets were fired, crossed the line still crawling and were soon outside it. This is what a wolf would do, if he had the intelligence of a human being, when the hunters put a ring of red flags around him.

We took courage when we realized that the ring of fire had been passed in safety and crawled back under cover of the shocks of grain and saw... one single German. He was sitting on a high rick sending rockets into the sky every three or four minutes; when the light died down he held his belly and guffawed.

I suppose he could see how the shocks of grain trembled and was getting tremendous satisfaction out of frightening hundreds of armed men with one single rocket gun. On his right lay a heap of empty shells, on his left a pile of rockets ready for firing.

We crawled up to him. One of the soldiers threw a long thin strap round his neck and then we strangled him, getting as much satisfaction in doing so as he had done when he guffawed. We hurried on, making a good

twenty kilometres till dawn, keeping all the time near the Gadyach Road.

By dawn we came within sight of a tiny hamlet that bore signs of having been bombed the day before. From some collective farmers we learned that only one German truck and a motor-cycle had remained in the village overnight and that there were not many soldiers in the truck. We watched the Germans in the morning and saw that three of them left on the motor-cycle and that only two remained with the truck.

The decision was taken immediately... This was my first partisan raid. The Germans were killed. One of our men, a truck driver, was dressed in German uniform and placed at the wheel, the rest climbed in the back and off we went down the Gadyach Road at full speed.

Until midday we kept to the country lanes. When we saw moving columns of German tanks in the distance we got ready to abandon the truck at any moment. Towards evening when we had grown accustomed to the truck and to our unusual situation, we became so bold that we made for the highway leading to Zinkovo-Bogodukhov; now and then we overtook single enemy vehicles, or allowed whole columns, moving in the opposite direction, to pass us.

During those days the enemy was apparently carrying out a general re-grouping of his forces, for troops were not only advancing to the front, but were also moving in the opposite direction and along lateral roads parallel to the front.

The sun had already gone down when, recovering from the state of nervous tension in which I had spent the whole day, I began to think that we might manage to get out of encirclement on the German machine after all. This would indeed have been the case had it not been for another adventure. The driver suddenly brought the machine to a stop. I pulled back the corner of the tarpaulin and looked out. Ahead of us in the fast-falling night I could see a column of German tanks. We had almost run into the tail of the column and could have continued the journey with it but for the fact that it had halted to allow another column to pass at a crossroad.

Our driver was about to put the truck quietly in reverse when a German got out of the last tank and approached our truck. The driver switched off the engine, laid his head on his arms across the wheel and pretended to be asleep. The seven of us in the truck probably knew a dozen words of German between us. We got our two grenades and three rifles ready. The German walked up to the driver's cabin and said something. The driver did not answer. The German opened the door and touched the driver's elbow. The driver muttered something as though in his sleep. The German walked a few paces back, then along the side of the truck as though he intended to look in the back but changed his mind. He stood there with his head cocked on one side like a poodle, then, staggering, walked back to his tank, little suspecting that he had thus saved his life.

A group of German tankmen gathered around the rear tank. They were talking loudly about something. It was impossible to distinguish the words in the roar made by the tank column



that was crossing our path. We could not sit there any longer. I put my head out of the truck and looked at the driver.

"We're stuck all right," he whispered to me. We had to act quickly before the Germans realized what was happening.

"Drive the truck straight into the column! We'll jump and you follow!"

The driver switched on the engine, put his gears into second, then high, the truck gained speed—I banged on the cabin with my fist and we rolled out into the ditch on the roadside like a sack of oats. Driving forward a few yards the driver switched on his powerful headlights and leaped from the truck. The wheels of the truck were checked by the kerb which kept it going parallel to the tank column.

We ran back towards a hollow as fast as we could. We heard a few bursts from Tommy-guns and machine-guns behind, then apparently one of the tanks turned its turret and fired its cannon at the truck. Several of the tanks began to turn round. My lads were hurrying along the hollow but, realizing that in a second or two the tanks might be on top of us, I shouted: "Follow me" and turned sharply to the right: we ran up a hill which lay conveniently above the road.

We had guessed right. Before we were more than thirty yards from the road along which the tanks were coming, they turned to the left and began combing the hollow with their machine-guns. We crawled to the top of the hill and dropped flat on our faces as rockets were sent up to illuminate the hollow. We crawled over the hill and lay down in the stubble, breathing deeply the dusty air of that sweet-smelling, peaceful cornfield. The grasshoppers amongst the stubble made answer to the machine-guns.

The tanks, firing aimlessly, turned back.

By that time the road was apparently clear, the traffic light showed green and the column moved on.

In the course of twenty-four hours we had got out of the encirclement and reached the front over a hundred kilometres away; the last five or six kilometres took four days and nights, crawling past sentries at night and resting in the most unusual places by day. On the fourth or fifth day we reached Bogodukhov, found our forward units and were sent back to Kharkov.

At the office of the town commandant of Kharkov in those days there were long queues of men who had escaped from German encirclement, a fact which did not astonish the commandant in the least. When he saw the seven of us our appearance apparently disappointed him, even made him a bit angry.

"Why are you in uniform?" he asked me menacingly. "And why are you carrying weapons?"

What could I answer to such a question? Many of the men came back in peasant clothes, in civvies—everybody acted as best he could.

The Army Political Headquarters in Kharkov, learning of my civilian training and work, sent me to the Political Department of the 40th Army to take charge of a brigade of photographers.

Eleven of us, armed with FED cameras,

gathered in the Political Department of the 40th Army—Nikolai Marevich, photographer and chauffeur, inventor and designer, Vasya Nikolayenko, smart and dandy-like in appearance, a good fighter and a fine political instructor, Oleinikov...

It was somewhere east of Sumy that I saw for the first time Germans running away during this war. That was on the 28th of September, 1941. The first rains had fallen and a thick, sticky mud covered the roads. One of our tank brigades and a motorized division had broken through the front at Shepetovka, making the 1st Austrian Division and a blue-blooded German division abandon their equipment and flee to Konotop. For two days our tractors were bringing in German 8-ton trucks loaded with all sorts of stuff. And for two days my lads were dashing about from unit to unit, their shutters clicking everywhere. We collected about five hundred motor vehicles of various types in the woods. In a small grove of trees behind the village of Nikolayevka we picked a new "Opel" car which had come off the factory belt only two months before and had got stuck in a bog. One of our photographers, a good driver, shorted the ignition across the switch and started up the engine. We drove back to the Army Political Department in our own car; this meant a great saving of time and space.

Mud, rain and the absence of roads robbed the Germans of the time factor. The Russian autumn mud clung to their hobnailed boots, clung to the ribbed tyres of the motors and prevented them from advancing. The Russian land gave us time to regroup forces that had been thrown into disorder by the enemy's sudden attack.

We carried our "Opel" through the mud, sometimes doing no more than seven or eight kilometres a day on it. When the frost came, and the severe winter of 1941 began, our 40th Army stood fast at Tim and Stary Oskol, not allowing the Germans to advance another yard...

During those difficult days of November and December 1941, when the first frosts set in, our "Opel," with the horseshoe on the radiator and a little red flag in the wing, appeared on the Shchigry-Tim sector and we even fulfilled orders from officers and men for photographs six by nine centimetres.

At first I regarded this new job as something temporary but later intuition told me that there was something big and important to be done in this line. When we withdrew from Kursk we took all the films, paper and chemicals from the photographic stores. This enabled us to work at full pressure and supply all the needs of the soldiers. At first we also tried to take photos for the newspapers as well. Once, near Tim, already occupied by the Germans, as we came to our forward line from the German side, I suddenly noticed a heavy-calibre machine-gun in time to stay the hand of our gunner who was going to put a burst into us. Within a few minutes we were firm friends and we photographed the machine-gunners in all possible poses.

"A lot of you come round taking photographs but nobody ever thinks of bringing us a copy..."

The next time we appeared in Colonel Rodimtsev's brigade we brought photographs for everybody—and this time officers and men alike gave us a different reception. At battalion headquarters they gave me lots to drink, a company commander took me along in the attack against the town of Tim, a regimental commander, Major Sokolov and his commissar Kokushkin, fed me till I was ready to burst. I still have hundreds of negatives that I keep as a reminder of the men of that famous unit. The soldiers of that brigade, later to become the 13th Guards Infantry Division, commanded at first by Colonel, and later Major-General Rodimtsev, Hero of the Soviet Union, gallant defender of Stalingrad, proved true sons of their country....

These people, Rodimtsev's officers and men, were not parade-ground soldiers. In August, 1941, in Goloseyev Wood outside Kiev, they turned back the Germans who were making for Kreshchatik and dealt them such a blow that the picked German regiments did not attempt to take Kiev for another month, although they were within gunshot of the city the whole time.

Rodimtsev's men smashed the Germans at Konotop and drove them out of Tim. Together with Rodimtsev's troops I took part in the attack on Shchigry during the heavy frosts of January 1942.

I soon became friends with the men of the Political Department. Divisional Commissar Zubkov, a professor of psychology in civil life, was a gloomy individual who, in general, talked warmly to me. Somebody told him about my civilian profession. One day he and I were out together near Shchigry ploughing our way through the snowdrifts. Zubkov stopped to catch his breath.

"Today the soldiers told me that some photographer had been with them in the attack and photographed unexploded heavy shells lying in the snow," he said. "What do you do things like that for? I have heard that the training of cinema workers costs the state a lot of money. Surely we are destroying enough valuables in this war without that?"

"And how much does it cost to train a professor of psychology, if you please?" I asked him.

We both laughed and continued on our way through the snowdrifts.

I liked to take advantage of the extra-territorial rights granted the war correspondent and sit for hours at Rodimtsev's command post. I spent much more time there than was necessary to take photographs for the newspapers. It was only a year later, however, that I really appreciated how useful this was. I learned about the army from Rodimtsev, Kokushkin, Sokolov, Zubkov and the others. When Rodimtsev was helping defend Stalingrad and his famous 13th Guards Division held the streets of the city against the enemy, I was crossing the Dnieper with Kovpak in the operation that took us to the Zhitomir and Rovno regions which were at that time over a thousand kilometres from the front. In the partisan fighting I recognized Rodimtsev's methods and perhaps had even learned to pass this knowledge on to others. What is more, Kovpak's best company commanders,

Karpenko and Tsimbal, had been sergeants in reconnaissance units of Rodimtsev's brigade who had remained behind the enemy's lines at Vorozhba and Konotop in order to carry out scouting jobs for Rodimtsev. They met Kovpak and became partisan commanders.

In January 1942 I was transferred from the 13th Guards Division to the 2nd Guards Division which was operating jointly with the 14th Tank Brigade; I was still working as correspondent. Here, for the second time since the war began, I saw the Germans run. Our tanks held a German unit squeezed tight in the village of Vypolzovo and after half an hour's fighting we left about a thousand Germans dead in the snow. The temperature was 35°C below zero and in about two hours the Germans were frozen stiff. In the gardens around the village lay the nine German tanks that we had immobilized with the burnt skeletons of their crews still inside them. Alejev, a tank commander who earned the title of Hero of the Soviet Union in that battle, saved me from a German tank which I wanted to photograph at all costs. The Soviet officer shot up the German tank just as it turned on me in the open field. I managed to get a photo of the tank at the moment when an explosion of the ammunition it carried blew the turret into the air. Two days later, to my great sorrow, I photographed Alejev's grave.

The soldiers were fond of me and my comrades although they could not understand what sort of saps we photographers were—we took soldiers' photos for their pass-books under fire and photographed the Jerries when they were attacking.

I learned to fight—I learned from regular soldiers and officers.

Early in 1942 I began to think more often than before that I ought to find my real place in the war. I had already tested myself under fire, had rubbed shoulders with the higher officers, had enjoyed the extra-territorial rights of a photo-correspondent and began to think how good it would be to command a unit myself.

Before the war I had had my own standards by which to judge people. Although I did not know whether I would ever have to fight, whether there would be a war and what kind of war it would be, I always tried to picture a new acquaintance under war conditions. I would screw up my eyes, look at him and ask myself: "What would you feel like at the front, my dear fellow?" This was a great help to me in determining my attitude towards people. It was like litmus which showed the psychological and, what is more, the ideological "reactivity" of people whom I refused to accept at their face value.

Now the time had come when I had to find my proper place in the war. "If I could only get to the partisans..." I often thought. Early in the spring of 1942 I said goodbye to the Political Department of the 40th Army and, accompanied by my staunch friend the photographer and the chauffeur Nikolai Marevich, travelled over the muddy Orel roads to report to the personnel department of the Bryansk Front. I carried a haversack



on my back containing several hundred negatives taken at the front.

What I dreamed of in those days is evident from an extract from a letter to my wife:

"...My work is very interesting when there is fighting, but when there is a lull I get horribly fed up and glare at everybody with the eyes of a wolf. You write about your work and your feelings. How well I understand you! I get that same feeling. I also feel that I am living somewhere to one side or that I am walking along the side of the road instead of dashing along the middle. If only I could join the partisans somewhere behind the enemy!

"Everything, however, is still to come. One thing I miss—you. I am sure we shall meet again, if only once again, for a few hours to see and kiss my dear little wife. Wait for me!

"If I don't see you again, remember that I have never loved anybody as I love you. I curse fascism for having ruined the happiness of many millions of people like us. Bring up our boy..."

When I wrote that letter I did not think of the immediate possibility of becoming a partisan; being a man of the "mainland" I thought of them as other people on the "mainland" still think of them today, idealizing their life and work. Three weeks later my wife joined me and read me that letter—that was two or three days before I flew off behind enemy lines. I had already made a trial parachute jump on the Yelets aerodrome and I thought that my fate was like that of the hero of *At the Pike's Bidding*<sup>1</sup>... All I had to do was to think: "If I could only go to the partisans..." And fate, at the pike's bidding and at my desire, granted me the impossible, the romantic, the legendary...

My wife came to visit me with my son, Evgeni, who was born in Moscow to the roar of anti-aircraft guns on the same day as his father became a soldier. We nicknamed the boy "Zenitchik" which means A.A. gunner. Now my wife brought the boy to introduce me to him.

At the time of her visit Major Yusupov, pilot and parachute instructor, was training us to jump. We turned up for the first lecture like good students, with big fat note-books and pencils well sharpened, ready to take notes. Major Yusupov spread out a parachute in a long table in front of us and with a strong Tatar accent said:

"This is an automatic landing parachute. The parachute does everything itself. You don't have to pull anything, the parachute does everything..."

That was the end of the theoretical part of the lecture. Instead of talking Major Yusupov went up" with each one of us. He tested each trap carefully himself, not trusting anybody. When the parachutes had been used he folded them himself. Later I learned that it depends on the packing of the parachute whether or not it will open in the air. Yusupov also made the air trips across the front himself.

It sometimes happened that people flew to their destination and then could not pluck up sufficient courage to make the jump. This feeling of fear is known to all parachutists. It is bad enough to have to jump into cold water, but it is even worse to have to jump

from an aircraft into space. There were cases when scouts were brought back in the same aircraft, clinging desperately to the plane, afraid to make the jump. In such cases, Yusupov, who went up with us, took the man by the scruff of the neck in the friendliest manner and shoved him overboard with a kick. The parachutes were really automatic and never failed. Later we called them "dog parachutes". The parachute is fastened to the aircraft by a long cord with a hook on the end and you can walk about the huge machine, like a dog on a leash, waiting for the order to drop.

On the "unlucky" date of the 13th of June, 1942, I said goodbye to my wife at the aerodrome. I did not notice when we crossed the front. A. A. guns fired at us but we were flying high.

In less than two hours the parachutes landed a radio operator and myself smoothly on the right bank of the Desna. After this I flew across the front a dozen times or so and by a strange combination of circumstances it was always on the 13th. On the 13th of June, 1942, then, drawing up my legs according to instruction and lying over on my left side also according to instruction, I dropped into partisanland. Partisanland at that time occupied a territory a hundred and twenty kilometres long and seventy kilometres wide—a piece of country four times the size of the Duchy of Luxemburg. Using this partisan territory as my base I had been sent to carry on reconnaissance work in accordance with instructions issued by the command. I still did not know how I was to do it. True enough we had been to "school" for ten days where we were taught one and the same theme in a dozen variations. In general this is how we imagined things: a man who was dropped in the rear had to be afraid of everything. He had to be afraid of being seen by civilians, afraid of some sort of police whom we imagined to be like the prerevolutionary police wearing cocked hats, sabres, Smith Wesson six shooters and long moustaches... we had to be afraid of... in a word we had to be afraid of everything.

I already had a year's fighting behind me, however... I landed safely and went through all the necessary manipulations with the parachute and with the load that had been thrown out behind me; then I sat down on a stump and thought—I must have done something contrary to instructions for even if you'd killed me for it I could not have made myself feel a bit afraid.

"Is everything all right?" asked a voice behind me. A girl and a boy came up to me and said that they had come to meet me. The instructions said that I had to fear them but despite all my ardent desire to carry out orders I experienced no fear. We exchanged a few phrases in order to explain to each other who and what we were, after which they led me—it was after one o'clock in the morning—to the staff of the United Partisan Detachments. The United Partisan Detachments was a big affair. It was something in the nature of a partisan "trust" or "syndicate" which consisted of over eighty partisan detachments operating, as it were, on a cooperation basis.

The Headquarters of the United was really nothing more than a central office which

<sup>1</sup> A Russian folk tale.—Ed.

collected reports, and through whose one and only radio station the news of the partisans' operations was carried to the "Mainland." The "Mainland" helped the partisans in whatever way possible—a case of cartridges, a bundle of fresh newspapers, food. As regards everything else all acted on the principle: "Everybody strike his hardest."

I met some partisan commanders who thought themselves great strategists but it was simply fate and the geography of war that had brought them to a sector where the Germans had insufficient forces for the occupation. Usually they worked in swamps or swampy woods. Many officers and men who had been surrounded made their way to such places. The one who had the greatest amount of initiative took over the leadership over them, usually it was the one who had the only sign of and key to power in these parts—the tiny radio transmitter "Severok" (Northern) which kept him in contact with the "Mainland."

The real heroes of the district were those unknown officers and N.C.O.'s, men who did not live to see the triumph of the partisan movement—amongst them Lieutenant Strelets. When I arrived he was no longer amongst the living, but I heard of his deeds from the Orel peasants. Nowhere else is the real and false authority of leadership so well seen, nowhere else is it laid so bare, as in a partisan detachment. Behind the enemy's lines the most reliable criterion of real partisan work, the work of the detachment or of its leader, is the opinion of the people.

Before adopting the life of a partisan myself—that is before I met Kovpak and again after I met him—I saw hundreds of partisan detachments—there was no end to them behind the German lines—and realized one great truth which was much later clearly expressed by Kovpak: you must do what the people want you to... Apparently Lieutenant Strelets whom I never saw—he died a heroic death in a fierce fight with the Germans in Bryansk Woods early in 1942—made of the partisan movement what the people wanted. Strelets' name was known in all the hamlets, villages and railway stations. His famous raids on SS units, on railway bridges and on the German police that were being formed at the time were related in dozens of variations.

My duty was to "serve" a railway junction. I had to get to Bryansk Station No. 2 every day and inform the command what was being sent, how much and where. The work was easy but required great pains and when I had been doing it two or three weeks I realized that it was most unsuitable work for me. To sit by the railway and report that five trains had passed through carrying ammunition when I knew that in two or three days that ammunition would be bursting over our trenches, killing my friends and fellow-countrymen, was just unbearable. Gritting my teeth I repeated the words of the English spy, Charles Russel, that had so astonished me: "The spy is an actor. He plays in the world's greatest drama—war. On the way you play your role depends not only the success of your cause but the lives of many of your comrades."

I had already made some friends among the partisan scouts of the region. They were

also impatient, they were not able to wreck all those trains especially as the railways by that time were already strongly guarded. The first operation which we carried out, and which was strictly forbidden to reconnaissance personnel, was the organization of a "bottle-neck" at Bryansk 2 in cooperation with the air force—such was our pompous name for this "operation." The partisans blew up the railway tracks on both sides of the junction, preventing all movement at a time when the junction was filled with trains loaded with ammunition and troops. When this part of the plan had been completed the lads came running to us.

"We've done our part," they cried, "now get us the aircraft."

"Send aircraft," we tapped out on the radio. But no aircraft came. We repeated our request. Still no planes. The Germans were already sending out repair gangs to clear up the "bottle-neck" on their communications. Still no aircraft. The repair of the lines was under way and still no bombers. The partisans shrugged their shoulders at me and my aircraft. I gritted my teeth and said to the radio operator: "Can you encipher a message?"

"Yes."

"Anything I write?"

"Anything you write," answered the sixteen-year-old girl through tears.

I wrote a radiogram to headquarters. I can assure you that it was not couched in diplomatic language.

Three hours later thirty bombers arrived and unloaded on the station. Everything all around was leveled with the ground. The radio operator and I were some three kilometres from the railway junction but the blast from the explosions stopped the radio set from working. My scout told me the next day that as a result of the bombing, all movement on the railway would be held up for several days. On the first day when the line was being cleared the bodies of over 1,500 German soldiers were removed. Four trains loaded with ammunition had been blown up destroying everything round about.

Three days later I received a reprimand from my immediate superior for the improper tone of my message. Five days later I received a telegram of congratulations signed by Rokossovsky. For the successful fulfilment of the operation the Command of the Bryansk Front awarded me the Order of the Red Banner. "For doggedness and determination in achieving an object..." is what they said.

From that time, although it was forbidden to scouts, I gradually began to participate in sabotage and go out on dangerous tasks. Partisan fighting requires exceptional skill and daring. I cannot imagine a partisan with a dull, disheartened glance and a complaining voice. It is only when people are forced that they can go about without dash and daring in their eyes. The partisans were all volunteers, romantic minded people; there were also some who got there by chance, but the former took the leadership over such and transmitted their style and spirit to them.

At this time a man, whose fame had already spread over the partisan regions, broke through the barrier zone occupied by Hungarian Regiments, and reached the Bryansk Woods



from the Ukraine. Some people said he was a gipsy, wandering about behind the German lines, others said he was a colonel whose detachment consisted entirely of officers ranging from lieutenants upwards and that he had tanks and aircraft. Whoever he was, the Germans feared him like fire, and the people told legends about him. In short, rumour brought news of a man who came up to my ideal of a partisan.

As soon as he appeared in the neighbourhood of Bryansk Woods, I, by that time an experienced scout, set off to meet him in a one-horse buggy with my girl radio operator. It was a long way, about ninety kilometres, the "duga" (the arch that holds together the shafts of a Russian cart.—*Tr.*) kept slipping, the leather thongs that hold it in place kept coming undone and we could not manage them at all. I was very glad when at last we saw two-horsed covered Ukrainian carts... That was in the pine woods near Staraya Guta, near the Mikhailovsky Farmstead, where Kovpak had his camp.

It did indeed look like a gipsy encampment. You could feel that the people did not intend to settle in the woods here. The covered carts stood around in groups, a strange sight in the Orel woods. Strapped to the hoops of the carts were Hungarian, German and Rumanian tents. At all crossroads stood machine guns and mortars of all periods and all nations; the sentries at the outposts were smoking aromatic tobacco and cigars, they spat disdainfully through their lips and looked on the local partisans with condescension. In short, even while still at some distance from Kovpak, I already smelt the aroma of my native Ukraine and its dare-devil fighters who were so far away from the plains of the Dnieper, an aroma that was reborn from the distant past, from the time of the Zaporozhskaya Sech.<sup>1</sup>

As I drew nearer I saw that their headquarters was by a huge fir tree near which stood a Hungarian ambulance. All around, poles were stuck into the ground with an opening in the centre. On one side of the ambulance stood a hurriedly made "table"—a board on four posts driven into the ground—at which sat a man with long moustaches and a shaggy fur cap merrily banging away at a small portable typewriter. Beside him a bearded, bald-headed man sat working, his spectacles pushed up onto his forehead. Visitors were apparently common in this partisan detachment for nobody paid any attention to us.

I offered my documents to the bearded man. He, it appeared, was Kovpak's chief of staff. His name was Grigory Yakovlevich Bazyma and I learned afterwards that he had been principal of a school. All his life he had been teaching snub-nosed, black-browed Ukrainian kiddies, and his hobbies were bee-keeping and fruit and vegetable growing. Many of his pupils were partisans in the detachment and some of his teachers were commanders. Bazyma turned my papers over and said: "The commander and the commissar are

away. They'll be back soon," and the staff continued to work.

"And where are the tanks and the aircraft that the partisans are always talking about?" I thought. So far I had seen nothing. Winding their way through the trees several horsemen appeared. Leading them was a gaunt-looking old man on a tall horse, wearing some sort of strange civilian dress. Beside him on a splendid Arab horse rode a fine, soldierly man with moustaches as black as coal and a glance that seemed to observe everything. The old man looked like a steward going over his estate. Both dismounted and the old man—it was Kovpak himself—began cursing somebody. Then, seeing me for the first time, he told me his name and held out his hand.

"Put your credentials away, we don't need 'em here."

Commissar Rudnev stood under a tree and watched us with a glance that weighed everything up. I immediately realized that here one had to keep one's ears open, that these were people who knew their business and to that no papers were needed here. I began to tell Kovpak why I had come. Suddenly he interrupted me:

"Have they fed you?" he asked.

I said that I was not hungry and the answer I got was:

"That doesn't concern us, our job's to feed you."

Perfect order, a calm and confident rhythm of life on the line of march, a rumble of voices in the woods, an unhurried and yet not slow life of people who know their own work—this was my first impression of Kovpak's detachment. When I got to know these people better I realized that I could fight only beside them. If ever I write a book about them I intend to call it *People with a Clear Conscience*.

The majority of Kovpak's people that I saw then in the summer of 1942 are no longer alive. Their graves are everywhere from the Bryansk Woods to the swamps of Pinsk, from Zhitomir to the Carpathians, from Wolyn to Przemyśl, from Warsaw to Brest and Bialystok.

As one leaves the Bryansk Woods one sees the lonely grave of Nikolai Bordakov, a famous scout; in the Carpathians, on Height 1613, in a cave formed of huge boulders on a mountain where only the eagles fly, lies Chusovitin; the fourteen-year-old partisan Mikhail Kuzmich Semenisty sleeps the sleep of eternity on the Hungarian frontier. In the deep and narrow ravine through which flows the River Zelenitsa, Mitya Chermushkin, a fine Russian lad from Vologda, covered the retreat of his comrades with his own body and sacrificed that which is dearest—his life; in Poland Nikolai Gaponenko, Ivan Namalevanny and hundreds of others laid down their lives...

These were indeed people with a clear conscience...

When I got to know Kovpak better I decided for myself that I was going to fight alongside him.

In Clausewitz's treatise of war one may read the following: "Guerilla units should

<sup>1</sup> Zaporozhskaya Sech—the original Cossack centre on an island in the Dnieper, immortalized by Gogol in *Taras Bulba* and by Ilya Repin in his picture "Zaporozhye Cossacks."

not be big and strong but numerous and mobile. They must be able to appear and disappear, able to unite, but this must not be jeopardized by the ambition and arbitrary ways of individual commanders."

Clausewitz was no fool after all.

Those who, despite their own ambitions, were able to unite, proved able to deal the Germans some hammer blows. And indeed, Rudnev and Kovpak were just such men.

Absolute opposites—Kovpak a sixty-year-old man with no education but with a great experience of life, an old soldier in the best sense of the term, a scout during the World War I who had lived in the trenches and crawled on his belly across Galicia and the Carpathians, who had been awarded two crosses of St. George and had served under Chapayev in the Civil War—and Rudnev, a well-educated man, a trained officer, a gallant soldier and a brilliant orator.

Rudnev had been wounded in the throat during the first months of his partisan career. He had been treated and cured in the partisan detachment. His wound caused a slight impediment to his speech which only served to make it more attractive. Speech was his main weapon in furthering his great cause.

Listening to Rudnev in a forest clearing when he was talking to the partisans or listening to his speech at a meeting of civilians, I first saw and realized what human speech can do.

Rudnev was not a stereotyped orator; every simple, ordinary word which he uttered was filled with passion; it had a definite purpose and acted like a bullet against the enemy, it cleansed the soldier of uncouthness and coarseness. Rudnev worked untiringly to train his partisans. He knocked all unnecessary cruelty out of them, he inculcated confidence into them, taught them to be patient and enduring, persevering, he ridiculed cowards and drunkards and dealt very severely with looters. He showed the right way to a man who, from fear or for some other reason, had committed his first crime.

The Germans said: "If you want to have power over people, join the police. You will be the master, you can eat, drink, rape women, you can plunder, acquire property and shoot people." And they found some willing to follow this road. "If you do not wish to follow this road then work without any prospects ahead of you and wait until you are driven off to Germany."

But if a man did not want to follow either of these two roads he went into the woods, took up arms and fought. He fought even when he did not know where the front was and even though German propaganda continued to hammer out that Moscow had been captured long ago.

Some people joined the partisans and then, under the influence of temporary failures, began to waver. Rudnev kept a special watch over such people, daily checking up on their thoughts. He directed them, helped them, cheered them up, taught them, made them like himself.

When I listened to a talk which Rudnev gave the partisans, or went out on a raid with him, he reminded me of another man, one who never existed except in the imagina-

tion of a great writer. He reminded me of Danko in Gorky's *Stories of Old Izergil*, Danko, who tore the heart out of his breast, and it burst into flames showing the road to people who had lost their way in the jungles of life.

Rudnev was a man able to carry the masses with him when they wavered, masses that had to be fed and clothed, had to be given time to sleep and time to rest. Rudnev could win them over to him. The role played by Semyon Vassilyevich Rudnev in the Ukrainian partisan movement—and not only the Ukrainian movement—was a far greater one than he had ever played in civilian life. Although he was only the commissar of the Putivl Partisan Detachment, his influence, his style of work, spread through hundreds of partisan columns from Bryansk to the Carpathians, from Zhitomir to Grodno.

The partisans of other formations always tried to imitate Kovpak's formation. It was the best not only because of its fighting qualities and its picked men but because its raids always opened a new page in the annals of the partisan movement. Partisans under Kovpak and Rudnev travelled farther than any partisans in other detachments. They discovered new lands, they were the reconnaissance troops for the partisans of the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Poland. Ahead of them rode a handsome forty-year-old man, with striking black hair and a black moustache, energetic and simple, implacable and impassioned; he held high his manly heart burning with hatred for the enemy and love of his country, lighting the way for his troops, never permitting them to become philistines of the partisan movement.

Fate brought Kovpak and Rudnev together in peacetime. Both had fought in the Civil War, Kovpak had been in Chapayev's Division and had chased the Makhno gangs over the Ukrainian steppes, while Rudnev, a mere lad at the time, had been at the storm of Perekop in the Crimea.

In peacetime they had lived entirely different lives. Kovpak worked in business enterprises or filled government or Party posts. When war broke out he was chairman of the Putivl Town Soviet. Before that he had managed a road-building organization, and now, when he was leader of the partisan movement, he would at times be reminded of it by Rudnev. When the partisans were particularly successful, when Bazyma, the Chief of Staff, brought him the month's record and Kovpak read as far as the figures showing the total length of the road bridges they had blown up or set fire to, there would be a comical sort of silence at headquarters and Rudnev would announce:

"Quiet, comrades. The Director of the Road Building organization checking up the repair work. Well, Sidor, has the plan been fulfilled?"

"Fulfilled, devil take 'em," Kovpak would answer and bending over the report, affixed his signature.

Rudnev had been in the army almost all his life. He began as a private when he was little more than a boy and by 1935 had risen to Regimental Commissar; he worked hard at his education, general and military,



and at the time of the incident at Lake Hassan was a well-educated, regular officer.

Exact in his demands both on himself and his subordinates, he combined military learning and smartness with a splendid knowledge of the soldier's psychology, his customs and his needs.

Later he worked in his native town of Putivl as Chairman of the Council of the Air and Chemical Defence League. That was where he met Kovpak.

At the beginning of the war Kovpak, Chairman of the Town Soviet, and Rudnev, Chairman of the Air and Chemical Defence League, each organized a partisan detachment. The first weeks of independent fighting showed the necessity to unite. As early as the second month of the occupation the two units met and Rudnev suggested that they unite.

"You, Sidor, take command, and I will be your commissar, as I am best fitted for it."

I remember the first meeting of the commanders of Kovpak's units that I attended. The matter in hand was an analysis of a battle at the village of Pigarevka.

In this battle the partisans had routed a battalion of Magyars but had suffered heavy losses. About forty men were wounded and several were killed.

"As far as I remember there have never been such losses before," said Kovpak to me apologetically. I could see that he felt this loss greatly.

The analysis of the operation began with a report by the Chief of Staff, then various commanders spoke and Kovpak, without waiting for the end, took the floor. It was not a speech, not an oration, but rather a talk straight from the heart, a talk that was powerful and passionate. One of the commanders, analyzing the failure, spoke of mistakes in the organization of the battle. Kovpak interrupted him.

"Mistakes, comrades, cost us blood, cowardice costs us blood, stupidity costs us blood." The audience was frozen still. "You say you fired at our own people... You shot our own people; it's true, anything can happen at night... But not this was the mistake... Why are you throwing dust in our eyes?" He turned to the commander of the Konotop Detachment. "Go on, you tell us..."

The commander stood up and began his report.

Kovpak listened attentively and then burst out:

"I hate lying... To me a lie is a knife in my heart!" Drumming his crippled fingers on the table and hammering out each word he continued: "Every partisan, man and woman, knows that we are fighting for the truth. I myself hammered this into the head of every one of you when you were enlisted in the detachment. Semyon has done the same... People must be taught to live the truth, speak the truth and fight for the truth... And you..."

The talk was closed by Rudnev. Apparently this was an established tradition. He differed from Kovpak in that he never spoke of obvious wrongs. He simply kept quiet about

them but in such a way that we all felt contempt for all and everything that was holding us back. He gave us to understand that such things were alien to us. In an effort to do good, people sometimes make mistakes. Rudnev was able to help better than anybody else; calmly and patiently he pointed out mistakes and took all measures to correct them. I remember that at this meeting he said:

"There are people who are brave, but they make one big mistake: they think they are doing their country and their comrades a favour by their courage and their fighting. The struggle against the enemy is every man's duty to his country and courage is his duty to his own conscience. We are not beggars and we do not need alms."

He sharply criticized the rash actions of one of the commanders who had not led his platoon correctly, brought his men under enfilading machine-gun fire and then, when he realized his error, threw himself on the machine-gun and was killed.

"Why do you criticize him now, Semyon Vassilyevich," said Bazyma, "you cannot raise the dead..."

"You're wrong," said the commissar whole-heartedly, "it's true, Yakov Gligorievich! The dead must not be forgiven, their mistakes either!"

"And why, you want to know?" put in Kovpak, suddenly becoming more animated. "I'll tell you why once and for all. So that the living don't make the same mistakes. D'you understand that, eh?"

At the time I thought this was rather severe but after that I was convinced on many occasions that he was right.

Such were the two men to whom fate bound me, a non-party intellectual, in August 1942. To tell the truth I had no quarrel with fate about this matter.

That night we had to pass the little township of Krolevets, a place where one of our detachments hailed from.

Kovpak quite suddenly sent for the artillery battery commander, Major Anisimov.

"Listen closely," he said. "You come into action tonight. You are always complaining that your baggage train is too heavy, that you are dragging too many shells about with you. Tonight the whole battery will act as cover on the road to the left of Krolevets. As the column passes along the road followed by my waggon, I shall whistle and you fire sixty shells at Krolevets." Stroking his beard slyly he added: "Bear in mind that my scouts will be roaming about the town, harassing the Germans, and I'll know exactly where every shell falls. Get me?"

Major Anisimov saluted and ran to the battery to make the necessary arrangements for the shooting.

About ten kilometres from Krolevets the column lost the way. One of the partisans who claimed to know the district was leading us; in the dark he took the wrong turning at a crossroads, led the column a few kilometres in the wrong direction and then found he had completely lost his way. Gorkunov, who was commanding the column that night, hit him

with his whip but this only confused the guide still more;

"Shoot me if you like, but I don't know where I am."

I went with a reconnaissance party to investigate a lonely farmstead nearby. We were glad to find somebody in it and began to drag the farmer out of his bed on the stove. He hesitated and mumbled something. While we were talking to the old man a woman who seemed quick-witted came out from behind the stove and listened carefully to our conversation. We tried to find our position on the map. The woman smiled ironically and said:

"Let the old man stay at home, I know where you lads want to go and I'll take you."

"And how do you know where we want to go, auntie?" I asked her.

"How do I know? Why, I've shown the way to plenty of your people after they got away from the Germans—people who'd been cut off."

"We don't want to go that way", I said angrily.

She looked at me in astonishment, smiled and then asked:

"But where do you want to go?"

"To the west," said one of the scouts.

"Then perhaps you want to go to Krolevets?" she asked. "I know the way there too."

"You don't know the road, auntie," said one of the men. "We're going farther."

"Where to?" persisted the old woman.

"We want to know the road to Berlin," said Cheremushkin.

Not in the least disconcerted the woman answered immediately:

"I'll show you the way, you go as far as Klimovtzi, then you turn right where you'll find a bridge across the Desna and as you cross the bridge you bear to the left and keep to the highway all the way to Berlin."

That was in October 1942!

We took her as our guide. She led us skillfully along the roads. She went ahead of the column and did not see how many men she had behind her. When we passed the outposts established by Kovpak's baggage train and heard him whistle, and our battery set up a running fire on Krolevets, she suddenly stopped and looked back... The guns were spitting fire and shells were bursting in the middle of the town. In the light of the fires that broke out the woman saw the long column behind her stretching for kilometres across the broken country; suddenly she dropped to her knees.

"Surely it's not true?" she asked in a whisper. "Surely the front has not come? Where've you all come from, lads?..."

A messenger from Kovpak arrived and said to Gorkunov and to me:

"The old man is cursing because the column has halted."

"Quick march!" ordered Gorkunov.

I hurried the woman on: "Lead the way, auntie, quicker!"

She got up and continued quickly on her way. Then she mounted a horse and as she hurried on kept asking us questions. I answered her questions and as I sat there on my horse I thought a great deal. That night I

realized many things. I understood the idea behind our march. It was not merely a matter of killing a hundred or so Jerries, of blowing up bridges and derailing trains, the chief reason for the march was that we brought hope to hundreds of thousands of Soviet people who day and night waited and believed that the Red Army would return and liberate them from slavery. The idea was also to raise the spirits of our people, to kill their fear of the Germans, to put strength into the hearts of those who wavered before the strength and might of the Hitlerites. What strength and might did they possess when columns of a thousand armed men could wander about the territory they occupied and smoke out their nests with artillery!

The sixty shells fired at Krolevets played their part. Kovpak was a real master of partisan warfare because he not only considered the concrete facts in themselves—the fighting and sabotage, but also the reverberation which an effective battle would cause amongst the people.

From that night on, our raid to the Dnieper and across the river was like a landslide, an avalanche rolling down the side of a mountain. The panic which the bursting shells raised in the town of Krolevets spread farther and farther by telephone and telegraph. The talk amongst the people put still greater fear into the well-fed cowardly Germans in the rear, drove them from their haunts and forced them to call for help.

The rumours spread by the people turned us into an army that had broken through. According to these rumours we numbered already thirty or forty thousand and we had tanks and aircraft. The fat Gauleiters could not sleep at night, they trembled feverishly and rushed by automobile to Chernigov or Kiev. Kovpak, who in the beginning had taken things easy and had ordered us to march fifteen or twenty kilometres during a night, now began to drive the staff officers on faster, urging them to make as much as sixty kilometres in a night, speeding up the raid.

We instilled courage into the people by our march and roused them to battle. Even at some distance from our line of march, partisan groups grew up spontaneously. Some of the groups that were formed behind us caught up with us and joined the column, others remained unknown to us, operating where Kovpak had been. They roused the people because Kovpak, fulfilling the task set by Stalin, did "what the people wanted."

When our scouts brought back the report that the people were talking about an army of forty thousand men with tanks and aircraft that was coming through the region, I did not quite get its meaning; I passed the report on to Kovpak who suddenly burst out laughing like a child.

"That's us, as sure as I live, that's us."

Somewhat crestfallen, I objected.

"But where are our tanks and our aircraft?" I asked.

The old man looked at me slyly.

"Well, what of it? If the people say they're there, then they're there..." he answered.

After having dealt with the Germans at Lelchitsy we took up our quarters to the south-



west—in the villages of Glushkevichi, Pribylovichi and Kopishche.

We remained there for about a month. There I made the acquaintance of people I had known only by repute. Lessya Ukrainka wrote some wonderful plays and poems about the Polesseye folk. As I talked with the old people and watched the young girls dancing I could imagine Levka and Kalina from her play *Forest Song*. And had the Germans been a little more interested in the poetry of the people they were out to enslave, they would have had nightmares in which they saw the sprite rising out of the Pinsk Swamps of Polesseye, dressed in a long Hungarian winter coat which reached its heels, wagging a goatee and carrying a Tommy-gun; and the sprite's name was Kovpak. Neither bullet nor steel can get him, the bony fingers of the Germans cannot get at his throat, terrified they lose courage.

While in camp Rudnev visited the wounded every day, saw how they were being treated, cheered them up with a pleasant word. Regularly he read them the communiqués of the Soviet Information Bureau that were taken down by our radio operators.

Once we went together to visit Nina Sozina who had been wounded in the battle of Lelchitsy. The seventeen-year-old Tommy-gunner was very pale but she did not betray her pain by so much as a groan.

I remembered our talk on the line of march when she told me that she had joined the detachment to avenge her father who had been brutally murdered by the Germans. Now she lay there badly wounded.

Rudnev went carefully up to her and took her hand. She opened her eyes.

"Comrade Commissar," she whispered softly.

Semyon Vassilyevich took a radiogram out of his shirt pocket and read it aloud to her. It was a telegram of congratulations. The government had awarded Nina the Order of the Red Banner.

The girl closed her eyes and her long lashes cast a shadow on her cheeks. Then she again opened her eyes and smiled at the commissar.

"Thank you, Comrade Commissar."

"Get better," said Rudnev softly.

"Thanks again," whispered Nina. "Now I'll certainly get better."

"You must," we answered.

In the village of Glushkevichi, in the very middle of the Pinsk Marshes, we planned a risky operation. When we had rested a few days after the Lelchitsy battle and had drunk up the vodka, rum and brandy from the cellars of the Gebietskommissar we again got down to business.

On the map which lay on Rudnev's table there was a small spider drawn with four fat legs—the railways—and blue whiskers—the rivers—and beside it was the name "Sarny." For several evenings Rudnev, Kovpak, Bazyma, Voitsekhovich and I sat over the map thinking of the best way to squash the spider. A repetition of the Lelchitsy operation—the "Partisan Cannae" as Rudnev had jokingly called that operation—would be impossible here. The town had a much larger garrison, the approaches were not to the advantage of the attacker and, in addition, many

lines of communication led to the town—which was the main danger as far as we were concerned. But it was precisely this that made the place the more attractive to us.

We worked our scouts to death and they brought us plenty of "tongues"—prisoners who might give information. I, who had been appointed Kovpak's intelligence officer, gave an exhaustive report on the garrison and it was clear that we could not take the town either by a frontal attack or by surrounding it. Our forces were small, our shells were running out and we did not have too many cartridges left. Reconnaissance informed us that the spider was sprawling out gluttonously. Munitions and troops were being sent hastily along the black legs to the front. In the opposite direction, westwards, went the grain that the Germans had looted, and high-grade timber for aircraft. That which hurt us most of all were the closed waggons that were going to Germany carrying slaves gathered in the Ukraine, our own Soviet people.

The fat legs of the spider were pulsating with the ever increasing number of trains and Semyon Vassilyevich, staring painfully at the map, struck the table with his fist.

"We have got to squash it, cost what it might. But we haven't the strength to do it..."

Then we hit on the plan. I do not know who thought of it first but the idea was soon clear in the minds of the whole staff. The cross. Mark Sarny with a cross! Rudnev caught on to the idea and immediately began to supply the details.

"Cut the ends of the legs off in all directions simultaneously in order to check all traffic at once, both east-bound and west-bound. Leave no path of escape for the Germans either to the north or the south. Put the junction out of action by destroying the approaches."

Before all the details had been worked out and the operation began we gave it the name of the "Sarny Cross" operation.

At Sarny the railways cross—north and south from Baranovichi to Rovno and east and west from Kovel to Kiev. At Sarny they meet and spread in all four directions. A few dozen kilometres from the junction the railways cross a large number of rivers. The simultaneous destruction of five or six bridges outside Sarny would settle the fate of the junction although the place itself was not to be touched.

All the bridges were to be blown up in one night and the evil spider would be crushed. This was how the plan developed in the minds of the staff and this is how it was to be put into operation by our companies and battalions. The thick blanket of snow that lay on the ground enabled us to carry out the operation silently and rapidly. We spread the companies out over a great distance, leaving the main baggage train and the whole cumbersome headquarters of the organization at a point a hundred kilometres from the scene of operations. This enabled us to maintain an element of surprise in the attack. The horses had been well rested since the march and over a good sleigh road could carry our combat groups to the starting point within twenty-four hours. The operation was a test of the maturity of our staff and of its ability to organize battle. At the same time it was also an

examination testing the maturity of the middle ranks of the partisan officers.

The difficult thing about the operation was that all the bridges had to be blown up at the same time though they were some thirty to fifty kilometres from each other.

Each of the five officers entrusted with the job was allowed to solve the problem in his own way. There was no question of communication either by rockets or by horsemen as the distance between "neighbour," as they say at the front, was several dozen kilometres and the territory was in enemy hands. It was difficult in any case to decide who your neighbour was. Just as it was difficult to say which was the left or right hand side. War without a front and without flanks—this is how I would define the tactical idea of the plan. The operation was carried out not along a front line, but crosswise. Every group of partisans facing Sarny, that is, facing the enemy garrison, had two neighbours on the right, one on the left and one in the centre. The group in the centre was surrounded by the enemy and at the same time had neighbours on all four sides. The operation was to take three days—the march to the starting point, the destruction of the bridges and the march home to join the main body.

As I said, there was no communication between commanders. Each of them knew the situation only on one of the five sectors. Our excitement, therefore, as we waited for the companies to return can well be imagined. On the second night when, according to our calculations, the companies had to leave their starting points, I remained at headquarters a long time. On my way back I saw a man in felt boots, in a cap and a leather jacket. It was Rudnev. He was walking back and forth nervously rubbing his hands and glancing at his watch. At that moment came an explosion from the south, dulled by the distance and the effect of the forests in between. In any other weather we probably should not have heard it at all. It was a clear, windless, frosty night. The snow crunched under our feet, the gleaming rays of the ring around the moon flickered against a background of millions of stars. Rudnev stood stock still listening, as though he wanted to hear the echo of the scarcely audible explosion.

"Good lad, Tsimbal," he said after a pause.

He walked a little way, stopped again, listened and cursed through clenched teeth.

"Hell!... Not a sound from that Kulbaka group... They're always late."

He walked a few steps crunching the snow underfoot then suddenly raised his hand and stood still. It seemed as though we did not so much hear as feel how the earth trembled away to the north, transmitting the detonation of six hundred kilograms of T.N.T.

Rudnev rubbed his hands with satisfaction and slapped me on the shoulder.

"There's something to learn from, Professor! Fine work!" he said huskily.

A few minutes later, directly to the west, there appeared a glow which gradually faded into the bright light of the moon.

"Berézhnoy, Berezhnoy is at work!" said Rudnev. "But why is there no explosion, what are they burning there, the devils?"

Flashes, reminiscent of explosions, appeared in the sky, but no sound reached us.

I waited for a long time with Rudnev to see what our only messenger in this strange operation—the quiet, frosty air of Polesseye—would bring us.

This occurred on the night of the 4th of December, 1942. That same night, fifteen hundred kilometres to the east, the Red Army completed the encirclement of von Paulus' army at Stalingrad.

Next day the companies came back and we learnt from their reports that the operation had been a complete success. The black tentacles of the railways had been lopped off in all directions, one of them had even been cut in two pieces. The fat spider would be weak for a long time.

That evening Kovpak called a meeting of the commanders, heard their reports and placed on the map his right hand with two fingers that had been injured during the World War I. Digging his fingers into the map, he seemed to be laying hold of the town, the roads and bridges, he clenched his fist over the map as though he were squeezing something soft in it. It was like squeezing curds and it seemed as though the whey would soon come trickling down from the Germans.

All the partisan officers stood the test. Who were those people who carried out their parts in this intricate operation?

Tsimbal was a sergeant from Rodimtsev's division which was at that time fighting at distant Stalingrad while he, over a thousand kilometres from his unit, had cut one of the enemy's major arteries.

Kulbaka was a cooperator, the Chairman of the Consumers' Cooperative of the town of Glukhov in Sumy Region, a soldier who fought in the Finnish campaign. He organized a partisan group and at first operated separately; later he joined Kovpak and became commander of the second battalion.

Berezhnoy was a Red Army scout, a paratrooper. He was a young, black-browed Ukrainian, merry and full of the joy of life. He possessed great ability in finding his way around.

Kovpak's partisans were very fond of him, especially the scouts.

These people, like many others, later became excellent regimental and battalion commanders in Kovpak's division.

The Germans were frantic. Reconnaissance reported that they had organized the transfer of goods by hand from one wagon to another across the places we had destroyed. To hinder this work we sent our groups to shoot up the places where the transfer was taking place and to wreck trains bringing up stores for the repair gang. Our scouts reported that this operation which we had begun so successfully had made a radical change in the ideas of the peasants of Western Ukraine, who were politically backward and who believed that the Germans were invincible. The peasants gladly welcomed our scouts, gave them the latest information about the enemy, went to Sarny and other places on our instructions and found out everything we wanted to know.

On the long two-hundred-metre wooden



bridge at Dombrovitsy which Berezhnoy had burned down, something very amusing occurred which set us roaring with laughter.

When Berezhnoy went to the bridge at Dombrovitsy he took two old men from the nearest village as guides. As soon as the guides found out who the people were that needed their services they were especially anxious to help. All along the road they kept nudging each other very significantly and all the while chuckled to themselves, trying to imagine what the faces of the Germans would be like when they discovered what had happened to the bridge next morning. One of the old men ran for an axe and a saw and began to cut down the telegraph poles and hack through the wires. Our partisans blew up the bridge and then set fire to it. The old men greatly admired the work and stayed with the partisans for a long time. The scouts, who went a few days later to find out what the results of the sabotage had been, told us what had happened the following day.

A German technical commission which came from Sarny to the site of the explosion found nothing but charred beams sticking out of the water. The commission was already acquainted with partisan sabotage and this sight did not particularly astonish them. But what were those big round balls, almost touching the water, that were hanging on long ropes from the charred beams of the bridge? One of the members of the commission wanted to go closer to look at them.

"Don't touch them, an accident may happen."

The next day another commission arrived and established the fact that the bridge could be rebuilt in a fortnight if it were not for those strange yellow balls hanging threateningly over the water. They decided to ask higher authorities and it was only on the third day that the local police, who accompanied the commission, climbed out onto the charred beams, seized the ropes and hauled in the mysterious objects: they proved to be only ordinary pumpkins which the police laid at the feet of the uncomprehending commission. In broken German a policeman explained the meaning of the things and, unable to contain himself, burst out laughing. The head of the commission, a typical fat German, could not forgive him for this and decided cleverly: "If he had not been connected with the partisans he would not have climbed onto the bridge so bravely to get those ... er ... things."

The "poor" policeman was arrested.

The Germans, however, never did understand the significance of this strange affair. I am sure the pumpkins were hung up by the old Ukrainians who were even more proud than we were of such a successful piece of sabotage. It was the Ukraine itself, true to the old custom, that had brought the Germans a "harbuz".

In the old days when a girl at her betrothal feast wished to show that she would not willingly marry her fiancé she brought him pumpkin—in Ukrainian, harbuz—and placed it before him instead of sweetmeats.

Our ties with the people became stronger and stronger.

*Translated by George Hanna*

SOVIET WRITERS ELECTED TO THE SUPREME SOVIET  
OF THE U.S.S.R.



NIKOLAI TIKHONOV



MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV



LEONID LEONOV



ALEXANDER FADEYEV



## MIKHAIL LERMONTOV

Mikhail Lermontov, one of Russia's greatest poets, was not blessed by a benevolent fate. He hated oppression and arbitrary rule, but he lived in a period when independence and character were not countenanced in men. He idealized freedom, but he was condemned to the stifling atmosphere of the drill-ground regime of Nicholas I. Above all he loved life and wanted to create, but he was fated to meet a tragic end before he was twenty-seven.

An officer of the Russian army, his name sprang into prominence when at the age of twenty-two he wrote his daring poem on the death of Pushkin who was killed in a duel, in 1837. These verses were copied and recopied until they went around by the hundred from hand to hand, and everywhere they found an eager echo, for they were the voice of progressive, thinking Russia shocked by the death of the great poet.

By that time Lermontov had written over 300 lyrics, twenty-five longer poems, two novels and five plays, among them works now regarded as gems of Russian literature. But none of them had appeared in print. Though he had been writing since the age of thirteen he had not regarded these products of his pen as worthy of publication. Indeed, rarely have there been masters of letters who displayed modesty as true as Lermontov's and set themselves such exacting demands as he did. It was owing to this that he was already an accomplished master when his verse first appeared in magazines in 1837.

Less than a year before he was killed in a duel, Lermontov published his novel *A Hero of Our Times* and a collection of twenty-eight poems. That was in 1840. He appeared in print only during the last four years of his life, a period so short that only the more penetrating minds were able to appreciate the full scope of his talent. Most of his contemporaries, even those who knew him well, had no conception of the place Lermontov was to take in the history of Russian letters.

Lermontov was not a professional writer. All his life he was torn between his own desire to devote himself to writing and the necessity imposed upon him by circumstances of bearing all the hardships of military service. He was with the army on its campaigns in the Caucasus, and time and again he risked his life in bloody battles. When not in the field he moved in the high society of St. Petersburg, although he despised it, fully aware of his own superiority. In this environment there was no chance of people properly appraising him; he was either regarded with enmity or showered with crude flattery. As for those who were close to the powers-that-be, they feared his scathing tongue. For that he was hounded, even exiled. Rarely did he associate with people



*Mikhail Lermontov. Portrait by I. Astafyev*

who could understand and feel for him. Remembering this, it is easier to appreciate how great was the talent and spiritual strength required of him in order to rise to the summits he attained, to create in so short a time so many superb works of art which many a great writer has required a lifetime to produce.

It is significant also that Lermontov died at an age when other writers are only taking their first literary steps. At twenty-six Dostoyevsky wrote his first novel, Ivan Turgenev had written no more than a few early poems that now are forgotten, and Leo Tolstoy had published his first stories. Lermontov at the same age was a mature artist rightly occupying one of the leading places in Russian poetry. How much more he could have done had he lived longer! Leo Tolstoy, who owed much to Lermontov, once said that had the poet lived longer many writers, who came later, himself among them, might have had nothing left to write about. It was said as a joke but it nevertheless contained a goodly portion of truth.

Lermontov was a born artist. He was an able musician, and an excellent painter, but first and foremost he was a poet in the fullest and finest sense of the word. Poetry was his native element, so much so that he did not allow the lack of opportunity for quiet concentration to interfere with his muse. This perhaps explains why some of his poems seem to have been dashed off on the spur of the moment,

almost without the corrections and revisions made during a second reading. To put his thoughts into words was a physical necessity with him. It is well known how he managed to write while sitting in company, travelling, or under other unusual conditions. He wrote on the walls of his prison cell, on packing cases, on table cloths and chance scraps of paper. "Fate constantly shifted him from one place to another," a contemporary wrote, "but everywhere he left poetic traces of his stay, never worrying whether his poems were preserved or not and forgetting them as soon as they were written."

Lermontov was never satisfied with what he had achieved but always strove for greater perfection. There is not a poetic genre he did not try and in which he did not leave superb specimens of his work. Lyrical miniatures and romantic poems, tales in verse and social tragedies, dramatic monologues and folk songs, the realistic novel and political satire all served as vehicles for his talent. With unsurpassed ease and freedom his virile imagination produced pictures of proud, courageous people, grand canvases of nature; stirring excursions into the depths of man's tenderest feelings, and episodes from history. And taken as a whole, his poetry was a majestic hymn glorifying the greatness of human exploits and asserting man's right to be free and to create.

Lermontov was born in Moscow in 1814. At the time of the famous Decembrist uprising, the first open manifestation of opposition to the autocracy in Russia, he was eleven. Although the uprising was brutally suppressed and its leaders were either hanged or exiled, it stirred the stagnant life of old Russia and spurred on the maturing of public opinion. The gunfire on St. Petersburg's Senate Square awakened a new generation of revolutionary-minded intellectuals to a critical appreciation of things as they were. Among the finest representatives of this generation were the leading Russian democrats Herten and Ogarev, the writers, and Belinsky, the critic.

Young Lermontov was a spokesman of this generation, the exponent in poetry of its thoughts and aspirations. The historical role played by Lermontov and his contemporaries was determined by the fact that they lived at a time when dark forces of reaction dominated Russia. The Government had not forgotten the Decembrists and ruthlessly persecuted free thought and the untrammelled word. The whole tenor of life was determined by the blue uniforms of the gendarmes, everything sincere and honest and progressive choked in the musty stifling atmosphere. "We live in a fearful epoch in Russia, and there is no relief in sight," wrote Herten in his diary. "Will the coming generations understand and appreciate the full horror, the whole tragedy of our existence?" wrote Belinsky. "Boredom, apathy and the frustration of fruitless searches is our life. Foul is the state that possesses a wealth of life elements but is clamped in an iron vise ... One's strength and patience are at an end ..."

These sentiments of hopelessness, loneliness and yearning for something better were shared by Lermontov. It is this that lent such sombre colours to his youthful poetry. The realization that his abilities were doomed to perish fruitlessly and the knowledge that he could not

apply them to any great social cause plunged the poet into gloomy reflections on the meaning of life and the designation of man.

Yet deep below the surface new forces were maturing, ready to take up the cudgels against the reaction, and Lermontov might well be called an embodiment of these vital forces. Public-minded and by nature a fighter, he could not be only a bard of disillusionment and despair, expressing the sentiments that gripped so many of his contemporaries. He had too great a strength to be vanquished merely by a hostile atmosphere. As Herten put it, Lermontov was accustomed from childhood to conceal "all that stirred his soul" in order "not to lose that which was concealed in its depths." "It was essential to allow thoughts which weighed heavy on the heart to mature in mute indignation... But one had to possess an immeasurable pride to hold one's head high while chained hand and foot."

No one had a stronger sense of that kind of pride than Lermontov. That is why, though pained and embittered, he was indefatigable in his quest, a fighter who strove to oppose another world to fearful reality, a world full of lofty emotions and noble deeds. All that Lermontov ever wrote is a history of that quest.

His acquaintance with Russian and foreign literature, romantic poetry in particular, gave Lermontov a wide range of themes and images to draw upon. The central character of his early poems was the man who stood alone, proud and unbowed though injured or spurned by society. Byron, with his titanic images and strong though gloomy heroes, had a particularly great influence on Lermontov's growth as a poet. When he was sixteen or seventeen Lermontov was especially drawn to the English poet; he studied English and kept a volume of Byron constantly by his side, he read and reread Byron's biography, diaries and letters which Thomas Moore published in 1830.

Byron attracted Lermontov not only because of the affinity of poetic motifs, but also through his participation in the struggle for the freedom of Greece. The Russian poet regarded Byron's life as an example of that courage and service to the people which were his own ideals. But if a kindred yearning for action, kindred love of freedom and a sensation of spiritual non-fulfillment brought Lermontov and Byron close together, the former was by no means an imitator of the latter. What Byron did was to help Lermontov to find himself and his style.

From the very beginning of his poetic career he regarded himself as a Russian poet, and in his early political lyrics he carried on in the traditions of the Decembrist poets and the young Pushkin. His plays and tragedies depicted contemporary Russian life, and the heroes of these dramas were humane, thinking men who were deeply stirred by the sufferings of the peasant masses and who branded injustice.

Lermontov drew his inspiration from his environment and the events of his time. With exultant verse he responded to the July revolution of 1830 in France. Peasant unrest in Russia drew his attention to the popular uprising and in 1832 he wrote his historical novel *Vadim* dealing with the period of the Pugachev rebellion. In this work he revealed his profound



knowledge of the life and the language of the common people and proclaimed the justice of the people's cause.

His knowledge of the Caucasus where he had lived in his childhood gave him an inexhaustible source of material. It was here that he, like Pushkin, found the colour and the images for his romantic works. To this "austere land of liberty" he dedicated a number of poems, among them *Izmail-bey*, *Bastunji Village* and *Haji Abrek*, in which he drew portraits of proud, freedom-loving, courageous men moved by an ardent love for their country. He drew on Caucasian folk legends, songs and tales to enrich his own fertile imagination and to lend his work its superb local colour.

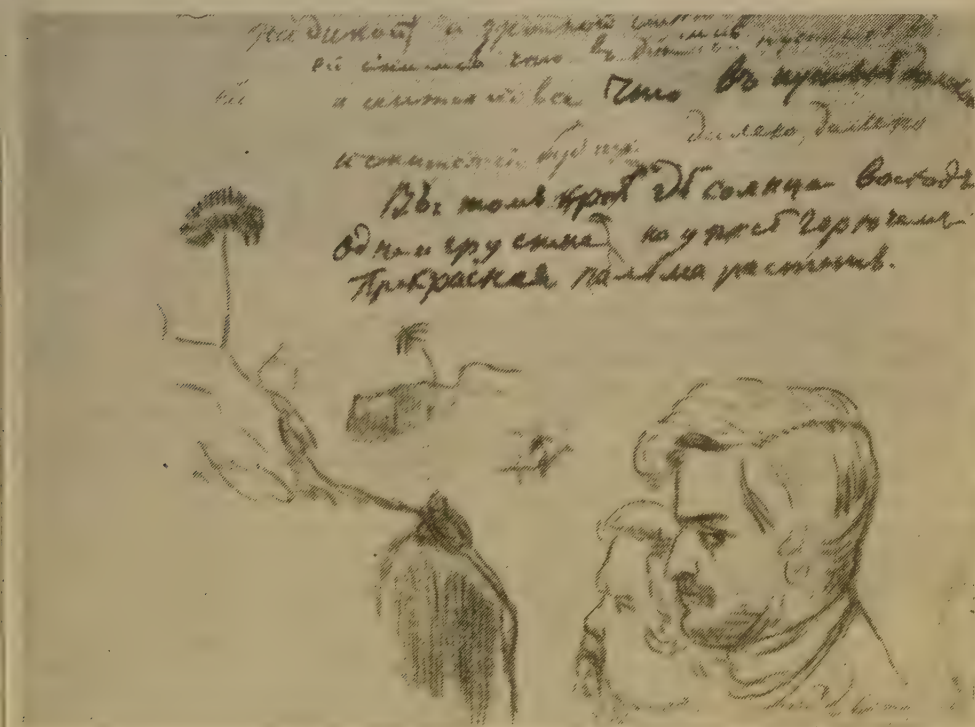
Lermontov's later development is marked by a deepening of the realistic element of his work. In 1837 he wrote his poem *Borodino*, a simple and unadorned story of the war of 1812 as told by an old soldier. *Borodino*, in which the poet expressed his own patriotic sentiments by eulogizing the heroic struggle the Russian people waged against Napoleon, was the first of his writings which the poet himself considered worthy of publication.

His attraction to Russian history spurred Lermontov to write another outstanding work *A Song About Kalashnikov*, the scene of which is set in the period of Ivan Grozny. As Belinsky put it, in this poem Lermontov "protected himself out of the contemporary life of Russia with which he was so dissatisfied into her history, and in doing so felt the beat of its pulse and penetrated into the innermost secrets of its spirit." He mastered "the manner of speech current among the people of the

riod, the austere simplicity of their customs and the titanic force and sweep of their emotions..." Indeed, the poet painted a broad canvas of life in old Moscow, its manners and customs, with its coarse but strong characters. The merchant Kalashnikov is presented as a simple Russian with a strong sense of honour and dignity, a man who does not forgive an injustice and when wronged boldly flings a challenge to the tsarist oprichnik.

Lermontov's critical attitude towards the high society in which he moved was sooner or later bound to bring him into conflict with it. The first clash took place when his inspired verses on the death of Pushkin resounded throughout Russia. In Lermontov's bold castigation of the "hangmen of freedom and genius" surrounding the throne, Nicholas I could hear Pushkin's silenced voice. He lost no time in dealing with the poet.

Banishment to the Caucasus only increased Lermontov's hatred for despotism. His travels through Russia and life among new people in the mountains sharpened his powers of observation and widened his horizon. In the Caucasus he conceived a major novel about contemporary society. The poem *The Demon* which he had begun long before and which bore traces of the influence of Thomas Moore and Byron, now became imbued with the local colour of the Caucasus. This poem on which Lermontov worked for years is one of the finest he ever created. Belinsky wrote that the beauty of its verse, the profundity of thought and vivid images made *The Demon* a truly colossal piece of writing. The poem's legend about a



Lower part of Lermontov's manuscript of *THE LONELY PINE* with pencil drawings by the author

proud rebellious spirit and an unending quest for truth might be called the very quintessence of Lermontov's art. This poem was not published in his lifetime and was circulated only in manuscript copies. It was regarded by the poet's contemporaries as a call to overthrow conservatism and oppression and as a fiery defense of man's right to be free.

Though oppressed by the hopelessness of his environment, painfully aware of his loneliness and stifled by reaction, Lermontov nevertheless did not withdraw into the small world of his own emotions and sentiments or seek a way out in "pure" abstract poetry. His *Elegy*, in which he branded the impotence of his generation and its shameful indifference toward life, and *The Poet*, in which he presented artists with a program of service to society, had as great a contemporary value as the poem *Mtsyri*, which completed his Caucasian series eulogizing freedom and courage.

The most realistic of Lermontov's works is his novel *A Hero of Our Time*, whose central figure is an officer banished from St. Petersburg to the Caucasus. Like other of Lermontov's characters, this officer—his name is Pechorin—is endowed with great strength of spirit, courage and intelligence. At the same time, he is a very unhappy man, an egoist spoiled by his social upbringing and doomed to an inactive, fruitless existence among nonentities. His energies, for which he has no constructive outlet, are misdirected. Pechorin tries to create for himself the illusion of an active life; he kidnaps a Circassian girl, kills his former comrade in a duel, and succeeds in winning the love of the beautiful and aristocratic Princess Mary. All this, however, does not yield the satisfaction he searches for, and Pechorin reproaches himself, keenly conscious of the burden laid on his shoulders by his superiority over his environment. This is a portrait of the man of the 1830's; through the mental state of Pechorin, Lermontov conveys the tragedy of a whole generation.

The novel's power lies first and foremost in the masterly depiction of Pechorin's personality, with all the wealth and complexity of his thoughts and emotions. At the same time there is an artistic charm defying description in the Caucasian setting of the story, in the landscapes drawn with the delicate touch of the watercolourist and the careful execution of the secondary characters, such as the old officer, good-hearted Maxim Maximych, the astute Doctor Werner and the fragile, devoted Bela.

*A Hero of Our Time* is one of the great landmarks of Russian literature, which fittingly earned the high praise of men like Leo Tolstoy, Turgenev and Chekhov.

During the latter years of Lermontov's life, deep-going changes took place in his mentality. The romanticism of youth was left far behind, and poems in the spirit of Byron were superseded by satirical tales in verse like *The Wife of Tambov's Treasurer* and *Sashka*, while the language of the people began to make itself felt more and more in his lyrics. Simplicity and clarity became the artistic principles of his style.

In this period Lermontov drew closer to literary circles and dreamed of retiring from the army and starting his own magazine. He plan-

ned new major novels dealing with ideas that had come to take up so much of his attention—ideas pertaining to the destiny of the Russian people and Russian national culture. Discussing this stage in the poet's life Belinsky said that "his eagle's eye began more calmly to probe more deeply into life. His mind, fatigued by the bustle of the world, already conceived mature works he would write; he told us that he was thinking of writing a romantic trilogy, consisting of three novels treating of as many periods in the life of Russian society ..."

None of these dreams and plans, however, were fated to find realization.

The gulf between the poet and high society grew wider and wider. His independence and his pointed epigrams increased the number of his enemies, and his pride prevented him from compromising. "He went his own way and showed no sign of changing his haughty, derisive and often brutal attitude towards one or another phenomenon of life," the writer Annenkov recalled.

Young Turgenev who met Lermontov at social gatherings said that he was struck by the poet's loneliness, his gloominess and the incongruity of his appearance in the midst of the rollicking gaiety surrounding him. Once, he said, Lermontov had stood leaning against a column watching the dancers at a masquerade ball. "There was something sinister and tragic about his features," he went on. "His swarthy face and his large, dark, staring eyes betrayed some brooding, resentful power and thoughtful, derisive passion. His piercing, accusing eyes were strangely out of harmony with his full, delicate, almost child-like lips. Deep in his heart Lermontov perhaps felt the ache of loneliness; he was stifling in the narrow sphere where fate had thrust him."

The Government had long had its eye on Lermontov and was only waiting for an opportunity to get rid of the restless poet. When he fought a duel with the son of the French ambassador, he was court-martialed and again exiled to the Caucasus to serve in an infantry regiment which was then preparing for hazardous operations against the mountaineers. Lermontov took part in these operations and displayed a gallantry that amazed his commanding officers.

The duel in which he lost his life on July 27, 1841 in Pyatigorsk, it was subsequently established, had been provoked by his enemies. The fatal engagement had moreover been engineered and sanctioned by court circles.

Lermontov's work—that "unfinished song" as Maxim Gorky put it—rapidly found its way to the hearts of the reading public. It is to the credit of Belinsky, the Russian critic who knew him personally, that he was the first to appraise the high artistic value of the poet's work. Lermontov was recognized as the finest Russian classic poet after Pushkin.

Lermontov was the poet of a transition period, and the path from romanticism to realism which he traversed was of great significance to Russian literature as a whole. It was after him and his contemporary Gogol that realism became finally established as the dominant trend in 19th century Russian letters.

VLADIMIR ZHDANOV



## ALEXANDER FADEYEV AND HIS NEW NOVEL

### "THE YOUNG GUARD"

Alexander Fadeyev is one of the best-known and most outstanding figures in Soviet literature.

He was born in the little central Russian town of Kimry in 1901. Both his father and mother were junior medical practitioners. After some years, the family moved to the Far East and the boy was sent to a commercial school in the city of Vladivostok where he was still living at the time of the revolution. When the counter-revolutionary bands, headed by Admiral Kolchak, began operations in the Far East and the Japanese imperialists attempted to capture Vladivostok, seventeen-year-old Alexander Fadeyev threw up school and joined the revolutionary underground movement. For two years, from 1919 to 1921, he fought in partisan detachments formed of Siberian and Far Eastern workers and peasants and later in the ranks of the Red Army against the counter-revolutionary bands of Kolchak and against foreign intervention.

When the armies of foreign intervention had been finally driven from the Far East and Soviet rule firmly established there, Fadeyev returned to his interrupted schooling. He spent three years in the Mining Academy (1921—1924). He did not however become an engineer. From 1923 on he began to write for the press. In 1924 his stories *The Flood* and *Against the Stream* were published, and in 1927 his first big work appeared—the novel *The Nineteen*, which placed him in the front ranks of Soviet writers. His books have been translated into many languages. Alexander Fadeyev holds the Order of Lenin and is a member of the Presidium of the Union of Soviet Writers.

In the years in which Fadeyev began to write, the Civil War and the struggle against intervention formed the major themes in Soviet literature. The majority of novels written in those years describing the struggle of the Russian people for freedom ended with the victory of the heroes.

Alexander Fadeyev chose another road. *The Nineteen*, or as it is called in Russian *Razgrom* (Rout), ends with the destruction of the partisan detachment. Fadeyev shows how Soviet people, Bolsheviks, met death fighting against great odds, how they met defeat, retaining in their hearts firm and unshaken belief in the justice of their cause and in the ultimate triumph of that cause.

The central figure in Fadeyev's book is the Bolshevik Levinson whom the partisans call "an upright man." Levinson is shown as a man of great moral strength. Nothing can shake his firm belief in the justice of the cause for which the entire detachment, like he himself, are prepared to give their lives. For instance, when the partisan Morozko grumbles at the difficulties of the partisan life, Levinson tells him to leave the detachment. To this Morozko replies: "It is impossible for me to leave the detachment, and still less possible to give up my rifle."



While devoting his novel to a portrayal of partisans, of Bolsheviks, to a portrayal of new types hitherto unknown to Russian literature, Fadeyev nevertheless follows the traditions of the Russian classics, in particular of Leo Tolstoy. Like Tolstoy, he advances the problem of leadership, of the relations between the hero and the broad masses of the people. Like Tolstoy, he sees the people as the prime source of the historical process. What determines the behaviour of the people? Tolstoy replies that this lies beyond the sphere of our knowledge.

Fadeyev does not acquiesce in Tolstoy's agnosticism nor in his negation of the role of a leader of the masses, of a military leader. To Fadeyev, the leader is the concentrated expression of the will of the masses; in this, and only in this, lies his effective power.

Tolstoy portrayed Napoleon as a small, insignificant man. In Fadeyev's novel it is only Levinson's outer appearance that is "brought down." "In front of the detachment marched Levinson, but he looked so small and he gesticulated so comically with his huge Mauser that it was difficult to believe that he was the chief motive force." This "bringing down" of Levinson's image, this portrayal of him as an ordinary man, lends artistic conviction to the part which he plays in the life of the detachment under his command. Fadeyev shows us how Levinson leads the masses, how he organizes their will, how by dint of his own will-power

and strength of mind he increases their power and strength. And all this is achieved because Levinson stands for the "just force," because he is a "just and upright man."

Fadeyev tells us that in the beginning Levinson "felt that he did not really command, but that events developed independently of him and of his volition... In this first short period of his military service almost all his strength of mind had been spent in the attempt to overcome and to hide from others the fear for his own life which overpowered him in battle.

"He had got used to the presence of danger, however, fairly soon; he achieved a state of mind in which fear for his own life no longer prevented him from taking in hand the lives of others. And in this second period he acquired the power to direct events."

This ability was due to the fact that Levinson was directing events in accordance with the interests of the people. His heroism did not flow from his personal qualities. On the contrary, his personal qualities were a manifestation of the heroism of the people, of whom he was one of the best representatives.

Fadeyev continues to develop Tolstoy's artistic traditions not only in that he advances a new solution for problems of the philosophy of history and of the role of the relations between the leader and the masses, but also in that he raises a number of ethical problems. *The Nineteen* is, first and foremost, a book of love and esteem for the human being. Fadeyev shows that "he would not have been Levinson at all, but someone else, if he had not been urged by an overpowering desire, stronger than any other of his desires, to help to create a new, fine, vigorous man," had there not lived in him this wonderful thirst of the liberating class. This was the wellhead of the forces which raised him to "that great human height."

## 2

Fadeyev's next novel was *The Last of the Udegei* which he published in separate parts beginning from 1931. Whereas *The Nineteen* had been written immediately after the Civil War, his new book reviewed the partisan warfare in the Far East in retrospect. This explains why the novel covers a wider range of situations, events and characters than *The Nineteen*.

In *The Last of the Udegei* the author draws a comprehensive picture of the complicated political and public life of those years. Here again, the foreground is taken up by the life of a partisan, detachment and its leading figures, headed by Surkov.

The writer's chief purpose here was to show the process of the formation of the new man, noble, strong and good, about whom generations of fighters for Russia's liberation had dreamed. In this sense *The Last of the Udegei* is of a particular value as it advances an important principle. Fadeyev raises the problem, over the solution of which the writers of many nations have struggled — the problem of creating a positive hero in literature.

Dostoyevsky, speaking of his concept for his novel *The Idiot*, writes:

"The chief aim of the novel is to portray a positive noble human being. There is nothing more difficult in the world, particularly at the present time. All writers, and not only ours, but all European writers had always been compelled to give up—whenever they had undertaken it—the portrayal of the positive, noble type. Indeed, the task is immense! I will only mention that of the noble types in Christian literature, Don Quixote is the most perfect. But he is noble only because he is at the same time ludicrous. Dickens' *Pickwick* (a much weaker conception than Don Quixote, but still a great one) is also ludicrous, and precisely herein lies his charm. The reader's compassion and, hence his sympathy, is aroused for the noble character who is being ridiculed and does not know his own value. The secret of humour lies in this ability to arouse compassion. Jean Valjean, too, is a strong attempt in this direction, but the compassion he arouses is due to his terrible misfortune and to society's injustice against him."

The exceptional difficulty in creating positive characters lay in the contradiction between the subjective qualities of such figures, their high moral strivings, and the objective impossibility for them to change life. Such are Hamlet and Werther, such are the "superfluous people" in Russian literature, from Pushkin's Eugene Onegin to the heroes of Chekhov's dramas and stories. They are powerless to influence the world, they are passive and weak-willed, given to meditation and hesitation.

Shakespeare, Goethe, Pushkin, Lermontov, Turgenev, Chekhov did not hide these historical failings of the people they portrayed. In this lay the greatness and at the same time the tragedy of their realism. In the past, many writers had attempted to hide this contradiction, and then they succeeded only in sketching a virtuous shadow instead of a man (the novels of Richardson, English and French bourgeois drama of the 18th century), or, as frequently happened in the 19th century, they hid these contradictions in their heroes' character under the screen of all forgiving love, or philanthropical humanism. And the results were the morally beautiful "poor people," the "les misérables" of Hugo, Dostoyevsky, and Dickens. These writers expressed their humanism in compassion for the suffering, but this was only passive pity.

The humanism of Soviet literature is expressed in the active affirmation of the will to destroy social evils. Therefore the positive character in socialist literature is not that of a small, poor man but that of a proud creator, a builder of society, a fearless fighter for the triumph of man and humanity.

The inability of the best men of the past to change the reality which surrounded them lent a pessimistic hue to literature. The attention of Soviet writers is centred on the creation of a positive character as the principal character of the Soviet epoch.

"The new historical hero," says Fadeyev, "is the hero who hails from the masses, who is flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone." This new hero is not isolated, he is not exclusive, and certainly not "superfluous."



Surkov is such a hero from the masses. And whereas Leyinson only dreamed of the "new, fine, vigorous man," Surkov and Alesha Malenky already see the birth of the beautiful future in the grim present. In spite of the difficult conditions of the Civil War they find time in their spare moments to dream of the future, of the new men who would be in a position to devote all their energies, all the strength of their intellect to the revelation of the deepest secrets of the universe, to the use of atomic energy for the good of the new society. Fadeyev paints Surkov and Alesha Malenky as men of sound, healthy mind and character.

Surkov's life is described from his early childhood. From an independent, strong-willed boy, Surkov, after a life of many hardships, grows into a staunch Bolshevik. As military commissar he is made prisoner by the intervention troops, and bound hand and foot, is carried off by his captors in an automobile. But even at this moment, Surkov's voice expressed strength, firmness and inflexibility, immeasurable superiority over the conquerors. Surkov succeeds in escaping from prison and becomes head of a big partisan movement. Under the difficult conditions of uneven battle he displays exceptional courage and daring.

Fadeyev shows that "nothing human is alien to Surkov," that even human failings are not foreign to him, that all human joys and interests are near to his heart and, therefore, he has such profound understanding for human suffering and humiliation.

His comrade-in-arms, Alesha Malenky, is expansive and good-natured. An old Bolshevik and a proletarian by birth, Alesha Malenky, Surkov's older friend and teacher, puts all his great *joie-de-vivre* into the intense class struggle.

His "sound, healthy mind" makes itself felt in the unflinching good humour which never deserts Alesha Malenky even in the fulfilment of the most dangerous underground assignments. It is felt in his lively interest in everything, from the splitting of the atom to the mining of iron ore. These features disclose the amplitude of his personality, the optimism of a builder of the new society.

The monolithic, strong-willed and purposeful characters of Surkov and Alesha Malenky are contrasted with the searchings and flittings of some petty-bourgeois intellectuals whose road in the revolution was an extremely tortuous one in those years. Fadeyev shows this by the example of Doctor Kostenetsky and, in particular, his daughter Lena. In her search for real life, Lena casts herself restlessly from one aim to another. In the beginning the young girl, full of the joy of life, sees the purpose of her existence in the consciousness of her own beauty, her own importance, like Tolstoy's Natasha in *War and Peace*. But this does not serve her for long, and from the joyous affirmation of her own being she passes over to a denial of all things personal. She thinks of Tolstoy's god, "the god of renunciation of personal happiness and pain." However, "direct contact with the city slums, with real sufferings and need, show Lena the illusory nature of Tolstoy's god of love and kindness."

Having exhausted the ways of this idealistic philosophy, Lena seeks the meaning of life in love. But her affair with the white-guard officer, Langovoi, soon disillusioned her in the poetry of love. On coming face to face with the revolutionaries she clearly sees the futility and senselessness of all her former searchings. All her inner resources are exhausted and Lena begins to see, vaguely and dimly, the possibility of a new life in the Bolshevik revolution.

Finally, the novel has one more theme—the problem of civilization in general.

Doctor Kostenetsky's 16-year-old son Ser-yozha joins the partisans. With the old Bolshevik Martemyanov he is sent to a remote district to establish contact with the peasants. On the way they find themselves in a region inhabited by the ancient tribe of the Udegei.

...And so, Russian Bolsheviks, fighters for the new socialist society, meet in a far-away corner of their country with the Udegei people who have preserved the primitive tribal order of life.

The moral integrity and purity distinguishing people of the tribal order have often prompted some of the most conscientious representatives of civilized humanity to advocate a return to the primitive past.

"All evil comes from the development of science and art," said Rousseau. All the sins of modern man are "the fruits of knowledge" maintained Tolstoy.

Fadeyev portrays the morally integral Udegei people with their tribal order. But it appears that this people is doomed to extinction just because it has not known the benefits of civilization. The salvation of the Udegei, as of the whole of humanity, is not to be sought in a return to the primitive past but in the striving for the new future.

### 3

More than twenty years have passed since Fadeyev parted with those participants of the Civil War who served as prototypes for the characters of his novels *The Nineteen* and *The Last of the Udegei*. Life scattered these people to different ends of the country. And now they have met again, men of the same generation, in Fadeyev's new novel *The Young Guard*.

Fate brought them together in the German gestapo in the little town of Krasnodon, captured by the Germans.

Here Matvei Kostievich, member of the Party District Committee, who has remained in the town to work underground, meets the former partisan Petrov whom he has not seen for fifteen years. Here, the German inquisitors cross-examine Kostievich and the old miner Lyutikov. Later, Valko, mine director, is thrown into the same cell with Matvei Kostievich. It was their implacable hatred of the Germans and their resolution to fight to the last against the enemies of their homeland that brought them all together in this place.

Neither the terror of the gestapo nor imminent death can break these seasoned fighters, either mentally or physically. In their last hours Andrei Valko and Matvei Shulga open up their hearts to each other. Their words

hold no fear, no doubt; in them rings pride for their past life: "So much as has fallen on our shoulders has not fallen to the share of anyone in history, and you see, we did not bend under it. And now, I ask you—what kind of men are we?" Shulga quired with the innocence of a child. "And the Germans, the fools, think we are afraid of death!" he added with a laugh.

These men do not fear death because around them has grown up a young generation, worthy of its fathers. The young people are marching side-by-side with them and after their death, these boys and girls will continue the fight against the enemies of their country to the victorious end.

*The Young Guard* was the name of an underground youth organization founded by young Soviet people in the little town of Krasnodon, in the Donbas, during the German occupation. The author has retained the true names of all the members of the organization. Of the vast number of characters only two or three are imaginary. The writer's intuition has penetrated beyond the outer curtain of events and places and has revealed that which was general and typical. Behind the concrete historical personages of Oulya Gromova, Lyuba Shevtsova, Oleg Koshevoi, Vanya Zemnukhov, Seryozha Tyulenin, Ivan Turkenich and their comrades, who knew each other from childhood, who attended the same school, we see the whole of the Soviet youth. These boys and girls embody the heroic properties of the younger generation of Soviet people.

The Germans came with their vandalic "new order" and the whole of the former life was broken up. All the men who had represented the moral and physical strength of the city went away with the army. Only helpless women, children and old people were left. What then would seem simpler for the Germans than to impose their will on these people, especially as from the very first days the fascists did not stop at any means in establishing their "new order"? But events proved that this green youth, these mothers and grandmothers, these old people, were unbreakable in their strength, and the Germans, with all their military machine, were powerless against them. They could torture and do to death these women and children, but they could not break them or humble them.

Before the coming of the Germans, the people of Krasnodon, as of other Soviet towns, lived a life of perfect unity of aims and interests. "Now each family lived an isolated life and from day to day the full horror and hopelessness of their position became clearer to them, and each family sought to adapt itself in its own way to this new and terrible situation."

But to adapt themselves to the new situation did not mean to give in to the enemy. Each family became a center of indignation, of rebellion. Almost every family had its own Grandmother Vera who understood that "that's their 'new order'". I am an old woman and I know that it is worse than the old order we had under serfdom." And the youngster, the schoolboy Oleg Koshevoi, enters into single combat against the German iron order,

In the same way, another schoolboy, Seryozha Tyulenin, unaware of the exist-

ence of any organization, sets fire to the German barracks.

Soon, however, the secret hopes and strivings of these Krasnodon boys and girls merge in one stream, and their organization, *The Young Guard*, is born.

Every new member entering the organization takes the following vow:

"If this vengeance should cost my life, I shall give it without a moment's hesitation. If I break this sacred vow under torture or from cowardice, may my name and my family be accursed for ever, and myself meet retribution at the stern hand of my comrades."

With poetical charm Fadeyev tells the story of how the young members of this organization fulfilled their vow. Their exploits are matchless, their sufferings unparalleled.

Profoundly moving and interesting is the scene in which Oulya Gromova parts with her school-friend Valya Filatova with whom she had shared her inmost hopes and dreams for many years. It is not an accidental leaving on the eve of the evacuation, it is a leave-taking that opens their eyes to the fact that their ways have parted, that their lives will now turn along different channels.

"Valya felt that here, at this moment, she was giving up that which had been the greatest and the brightest thing in her life, and that only something very drab, and at the same time unknown and terrible, remained.

"And Oulya felt that she was losing the only person to whom she could reveal the whole of herself, just as she was, in moments of happiness or of extreme mental anguish. Oulya wept because this was the end of her childhood, she was grown up now, and going out into the world, and she was setting forth alone."

The farewell to childhood and adolescence is followed by touching humour when the author describes the youthful "maximalism" of Seryozha Tyulenin:

"Suppose you have the heart of an eagle, but you are still small, you are badly dressed, there are callouses on your feet. What would you do, reader? Of course, first of all you would achieve some daring exploit. Who is there that does not dream of exploits in childhood—but it is not always possible to carry them out."

But this was not the thirst for adventure of youngsters who had read the novels of Mayne Reid and imagined themselves heroes. This had a very concrete aim and showed itself in the exploits of these boys and girls who were defending their homeland. Life had thrown them into the uttermost depths of human suffering, and from these depths the Krasnodon youth rose to the supreme heights of the human spirit.

The novel has one outstanding peculiarity which should not go unmentioned. The book is full of descriptions of horrors and atrocities of the German invaders; people are buried alive, women and children are mown down by the machine-guns of low-flying aircraft. Each page tells of unprecedented physical and mental torments, and yet the book is dominated by an atmosphere of the fullness and happiness of life which no German torture-chambers can destroy.



Over the heads of the boys and girls of the *Young Guard* "a black shadow was spreading, a shadow that had come up behind them and had already stretched its wings everywhere in the north and in the south." But this shadow could not darken in them the knowledge of the beauty of life, could not deprive them of the joy of existence. "Indeed, our sufferings were great, but life is nevertheless beautiful," said Vanya Zemnukhov. The offerings of these boys and girls are illuminated by the beauty and the strength which they themselves embody. When the rumbling of the German guns, approaching the town, can already be heard, Oulya Groznova stands before a lily, lost in admiration. And Oulya herself, with her "beautiful black eyes, wide and shining and liquid, resembled the lily mirrored in the dark water."

Unforgettable is the image of dancing Lyuba Shevtsova, who "was never tired and never refused anybody a dance, while her eyes—azure or violet—and her small, even white teeth sparkled with happiness." Unforgettable, too, is the first meeting between Oleg Koshevoi and Oulya, when he stops the run-away horses and gazes in wonder at her beauty.

Although all these young people clearly understand that the old life is over and done with, nevertheless, even in the face of the impending catastrophe, they continue to live full life. In their days of greatest trial they do not relinquish their dreams of friendship, of love and poetry. Amidst the stream of refugees, Vanya Zemnukhov reads his verses to Zhora Arutunyan:

"Is this the time," asks Zhora Arutunyan, "to write love lyrics, like Simonov, when the people have to be trained in the spirit of implacable hatred for the enemy! Now is the time to write political poems, like Mayakovsky..."

"That's not the point. We may write about everything," says Vanya Zemnukhov thoughtfully. "If we were born and live a life, such as generations of the best people have been dreaming about and have been fighting for, we can and may write about everything which fills our lives, it is all important and necessary."

Oleg and Vanya, Oulya and Lyuba live and breathe in unison with their homeland. They recall how happy their life had been before the war. They know that to defend their happiness means to defend their homeland which ensures them the beauty and happiness of life.

The valiant fighters of *The Young Guard* were bred and reared in the years of peaceful life in the Soviet land. These boys and girls had learned only from books and from the stories of their fathers about the heroic struggle in which the Land of the Soviets won its right to existence. They had admired the courage of their fathers and envied them their good fortune in having taken part in such great deeds. They were worthy children of those fathers, but they were already people of another type which had been created in the years of the revolution, and about which their fathers had only dreamed in the days of their own youth.

Life had offered them those possibilities

of which their fathers had been deprived. Along with the desire for heroic exploits they had known the joys of free creative work, the joy of perceiving beauty in life and in art. The ethic principles of life had merged with its esthetic principles.

This unity of ethics and esthetics is the basic principle of Fadeyev's novel *The Young Guard*. Fadeyev has found the right key with which to unlock the secret of these young souls, still immature in life but already ripe for heroic exploits. In her diary Oulya writes: "everything, everything in life must be beautiful." And this brings to mind Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, the Soviet schoolgirl, who copied into her diary Chekhov's words about Man "who must be beautiful and noble in everything—in his appearance, in his clothes and in his thoughts. Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya subsequently went to her death unhesitatingly defending those forms of life which had made the dreams of the Soviet youth about the beautiful, noble human being come true.

The conception about the beauty of life, the understanding of its value are inseparably bound up for these boys and girls with their desire to fulfil their duty to their country. Hence the wish for heroic deeds which are to them the supreme incarnation of their dreams about beauty, the synthesis of their moral and esthetic strivings.

It is not by accident that Oulya enters in her diary the words of the well-known Young Communist writer and hero of the Civil War, Nikolai Ostrovsky:

"The dearest thing a person has is life. He has only one life, and must live it so that he should not suffer for his wasted years, so that he should not burn with shame for a contemptible and trivial past..."

The physical beauty of Lyuba and Oulya, their specific individuality are accidental facts in their lives. Without it they would have been just as radiant and beautiful as Oleg is beautiful and noble in his goodness and strength, in his kindness and cruelty; as Seryozha Tyulenin in his courage and implacability; as Vanya Zemnukhov in his poetical enthusiasm, as Ivan Turkenich in his open daring. Their spiritual beauty is born of their poetical world outlook which is essential to the shining heights of beauty. This poetical world outlook, as an integral conception of life, becomes possible only when the surroundings cease to be an object of struggle, when the full and unhindered development of the individual is made possible, when conditions obtain for harmonic relations between man and the world. Then the new man is born. Then the young generation begins to be formed about which Fadeyev writes:

"The face held what might seem to be the most contradictory characteristics—dreaminess and activity, fantasy and practical common sense, love and kindness and ruthlessness, breadth of feeling and sober calculation, a passionate love for the joys of life and self-restraint."

In this picture of the younger generation Fadeyev has succeeded first and foremost in conveying those stirrings of the soul, which are so inherent to youth, those uncom-

prehended currents of feelings and thoughts which stream through the young being at that stage of its growth, at the threshold of life.

The young boys and girls of Krasnodon, having undergone the cruel tortures of the gestapo, remained true to their vow. With a stoicism inherited from generations of Russian fighters for freedom, from their Bolshevik fathers, they remained firm in face of all the attempts of the gestapo-men to make them betray their comrades, their country.

The truth of their sacred exploit inspired Fadeyev with that simplicity and veracity with which he has told the tale of *The Young Guard* and that realistic restraint with which he has described the Germans.

Who are they, these men who have committed such monstrous crimes? They are sitting in the dock today in various cities of Europe, and the world shudders at the list of their crimes.

On reading Fadeyev's new novel *The Young Guard* I recalled an episode that took place at the plenum of the Union of Soviet Writers in Moscow, in the winter of 1937. The large hall of the Polytechnical Museum was filled to overflowing by writers and journalists. In the tense atmosphere that prevailed while heated discussions were going on on controversial problems of Soviet literature and art, Fadeyev took the floor. He opened a thick volume and began to read. Everybody stopped to listen. Fadeyev was reading from Leonardo da Vinci's *Treatise on Painting*:

"Painting of historical topics must arouse the spectators and observers to similar ac-

tion as that which led to the portrayal of the historical topic."

"I also maintain that in historical topics, direct contradictions must be brought out in close proximity to each other so that they may be strengthened by the contrast, and the nearer they are the greater will be the contrast, i.e., the hideous in proximity with the beautiful, the large with the small, the old with the young, the strong with the weak, and in this manner they should be varied as much as possible and as close to each other as possible."

I doubt whether Fadeyev then thought that the time would come, when he would write a historical novel, replete with such contrasts: the high and the low, the heroic and the egoistical, the hideous and the beautiful.

Fadeyev read on for a long time, commenting on the thoughts of the great master on realistic art. How unexpected amidst the hot arguments were those quiet words breathing of the wisdom of centuries!

As I was reading *The Young Guard* I recalled Fadeyev at the Writers' Plenum reading Leonardo da Vinci to a hushed audience. It had seemed then as though invisible threads had reached down to us from the men of that epoch, who, at the dawn of a new time, had fought for their right to the joy of life, who after centuries of barbaric suppression of the individual had again felt the desire for life, who had proclaimed the cult of beauty and reason. In Fadeyev's novel, the re-born and freed citizen of the land of the Soviets takes a full breath of the new life.

SOPHIA NELS

## ON LITERARY CRITICISM

The Moscow *Literaturnaya Gazeta* recently devoted quite a lot of space in its columns to a lively discussion on the new tasks confronting critics and historians of literature. A discussion of this kind is a sign of the times. The end of the war and the return to peacetime conditions have opened up fresh opportunities in every branch of Soviet culture, and in particular in literary criticism. The bookman sees much to gladden the heart. New books are daily coming off the press and the publication of magazines closed down in wartime has now been resumed. Several more volumes of the monumental *History of Russian Literature* compiled by the Academy of Sciences will shortly appear; histories of American, French and Italian literature, commenced before the war, are being prepared for the press; volume I has been published of the comprehensive two-volume *History of English Literature*, compiled by members of the staff of the Academy of Science's Institute of World Literature; new research on the life of the Russian poet Lermontov has come from the pen of Professor N. Brodsky, while Professor P. Lebedev-Polyansky, Corresponding Member of the Academy, has completed a book on Visarion Belinsky, founder of Russian classic criticism; V. Gebel, the young critic, has

published her researches on Leskov, the Russian writer of the latter half of the 19th century. I have mentioned but a few names and facts, but they are illustrative of the fresh impetus gained by literary criticism in the last few months.

It was against this background that Professor Grigori Gukovsky's *Notes of a Literary Historian* appeared in the Moscow *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. The author, known for his work on Russian 18th century literature, is now back in Leningrad lecturing after his evacuation from the city during the blockade.

The article I mentioned expressed satisfaction at the new activity to be seen in literary criticism, but also voiced a certain apprehension. The readers of today expect from the critic something that is fresh and inspiring, not merely a repetition of things already said. "Have we, Soviet historians of literature, something new to say to our reader?" he asks. "It seems to me unthinkable that in 1946 we should work just as we did in prewar years."

Gukovsky has no intention of belittling the work done by the Soviet historians of literature before the war. He does, however, deprecate the absence of close unity in the work of critics and historians of literature.



What Professor Gukovsky has in mind is what may be termed the division of labour long established between these two groups: one engaged exclusively on the past, the other on contemporary literature.

The work done by historians of literature includes penetrating and scholarly works, both biographies and commentaries, Gukovsky says, referring to some Soviet researches on Tolstoy and Gorky. These, however, are biographies, not studies of the writers' creative laboratories, as it were. He sees the reason for this in the fact that criticism and history exist separately; in his opinion "criticism is the history of the literature of today, while the history of literature consists in criticism of books and writers of the past."

Historians engage in specialized investigation of facts. They are too deeply engrossed in the examination of specific problems, when, in Professor Gukovsky's opinion, they should pay more attention to an integrated study of literature, "pass from analysis to synthesis," and compile books giving an all-round characterization of the particular writer's work, cover entire literary epochs and, finally, the whole history of Russian literature.

The third question raised by Gukovsky concerns the planning of research. In his opinion, the numerous organizations specializing in the study of literature in this country, such as those under the auspices of the Academy of Sciences, the universities, and the Writers' Union, should reach a common understanding on the framing of one integral plan of research.

The first response to Professor Gukovsky's suggestion came from a Leningrad colleague, Professor Eichenbaum, author of two volumes of research on the early life of Leo Tolstoy. Though the article was entitled *We Must Come to an Agreement*, Eichenbaum expressed himself in opposition to his colleague's views. He raised no objections to links being established between criticism and the study of literary subjects which, by their very nature, are far removed from criticism. Regarding the problems of integration (as Gukovsky terms them) Eichenbaum is of the opinion that the task did not lie in the solution of these, but in the elaboration of questions which connect the history of literature with esthetics, linguistics and the study of the arts. He objected very definitely to planning, which he regards as applicable only to the compilation of text-books and popular books about writers, that is to say, to writing that has nothing original in it, but consists simply in reducing to a system and summing up material already studied. To Eichenbaum the planning of original research seems a dubious proposition, which should at least be approached in an entirely different way from the planning of text-book publication.

The articles by Gukovsky and Eichenbaum were discussed at a meeting of critics held at the Leningrad Writers' Club. Lev Plotkin, author of a monograph on the nineteenth century Russian critic Pisarev, voiced the opinion that Gukovsky's article might create a false impression and suggest that our critics did not now an ability to deal with theoretical problems. He referred to works by Soviet historians of literature produced during the last few years,

including works on Krylov, Lermontov, Belinsky, Pisarev, Pisemsky, which treated not only of special questions of biography but analyzed the style and the philosophy of these outstanding representatives of Russian poetry, fiction and esthetics.

B. Meilach whose book on *Lenin and Problems of Russian Literature* is to appear shortly, said that in the work of our critics the border line often disappears between the study of the history of literature and that of other fields of social thought. He recommended that more attention should be paid to subjects like the psychology of creative work, which has been very little studied up to now.

Professor Victor Zhirmunsky drew a line between criticism and the history of literature. The lively exchange of opinions among other critics who attended the Leningrad meeting showed that, as was said by M. Azadovsky, an expert on folklore, the discussion on the tasks confronting literary criticism was of immediate interest and value.

Then came the turn of critics from Moscow. First to speak was G. Brovman. This young critic specializes in contemporary literature, as distinct from most of the other participants, who represent the history of literature. While serving with the colours he contributed to an army newspaper, and was war-correspondent for *Izvestia*. Brovman spoke in support of Gukovsky's point of view, and objected very strongly to Eichenbaum's drawing a line of demarcation between text-books and popular works on the one hand, and research work on the other. Eichenbaum had written that text-books did not necessarily require originality and novelty, and that to compile them did not call for "long thought and scientific creative effort." In Brovman's opinion there was a certain aristocratism about this viewpoint, which held that the mass reader might be given books of simplified content, while the research containing fresh and original treatment of problems should be reserved for a select circle of specialists.

Brovman objected very strongly to this viewpoint, and demanded that books intended for the general public should be on a high scientific and critical level. He insisted too, that Eichenbaum's views are refuted by the work of Soviet critics and scholars. The *History of Russian Literature* published by the Academy of Sciences is widely used by teachers at schools and colleges, though it is academic in the true sense of the word, profound in content, and original in its treatment of a number of problems.

In Brovman's opinion aristocratism is seen again in the indifference of some critics and historians to problems of Soviet literature. He considers it a mistake to make a study exclusively of phenomena located in the past. The study of Soviet literature should be of a deeper, more academic nature. Professors Timofeyev and Rozanov, historians of the classics of literature, and at the same time experts on contemporary literature, were Brovman considered, examples to others. The chairs of Russian classics and Soviet literature, which existed separately at Moscow University, were recently merged in order to do away with this artificial division.

Leonid Grossman, 'historian of literature, critic and writer, raised a very special question in his article. Russian criticism has always been an art, he said, illustrating this statement by many examples. In the research of critics and historians of literature, "the scientific method should be combined with the artistic." The great Russian critic Belinsky, he reminded us, was a "true poet in prose." "Monographs on writers are not merely analysis and logic, but belong to the province of art. An all-round conception, good composition and expressiveness are as necessary in these as in poems and dramas ... In particular, artistic methods should be followed in the analysis of literary works valuable for their scope and the conclusions they infer. The material itself awaits, as it were, artistic treatment, and leads into the fascinating realm of the art. The way from the libraries and archives to the museums and picture galleries has been trodden by many Soviet men of letters."

Grossman says too that the development of esthetic taste will be encouraged by the fact that the People's Commissariat of Education recently included in school programmes in literature the comparative study of writers and painters. Studies of the poet Lermontov, and the artist Vrubel, of Gorky and Repin, of Nekrasov and "The Travellers" have been published by Soviet critics.

Professor Alexander Beletsky, Member of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, who lectures in Kiev and Moscow universities, considers that the argument on the question of whether a line of demarcation exists between criticism and the science of literature is based on a misconception. "Two attitudes to literature are perfectly acceptable. The right of the talented reader to speak of the impression made upon him by a book cannot be questioned. No scientific standards can be applied to these opinions, but they may be taken as literary facts, valuable from various aspects, backed by the example of Russian revolutionary-democratic criticism which had a scientific trend."

Beletsky reminds us that in the nineteen-twenties a particularly keen interest was

taken in questions of esthetics and the theory of literature. Critics of the formalistic school exercised a great deal of influence at first. They were pushed into the background by representatives of sociological criticism, many of whom carried to extremes the application of sociological principles in literature. There were even some who strove to base the work of certain writers on economic conditions. This was the school of vulgar sociology which, as Professor Beletsky pointed out, was the object of a fierce struggle begun in the thirties.

This stage is a thing of the past but traces of it are still perceptible now and again in the work of some critics. The arguments that raged around these two schools demonstrated the necessity for the study of Marxism from the direct sources, and not from so-called "popular" text-books. These arguments brought up the question of a more thorough study of art forms, and proved the impossibility of a divorcing of literary processes from the facts of life. Beletsky sees the solution of all controversial and complex questions of criticism in the elaboration of the theory of literature. Instead of being a science apart from living literature, it must be a science to which the writer should turn eagerly, seeking lessons in it, testing his own experience, and discovering in it the experience of other writers, past and present. In his opinion literary conferences should be held in important scientific centres. Here preparation could be made for a U.S.S.R. Congress of historians of literature and critics, for an exchange of opinions on the most urgent problems of theory.

The fact that differences on particular problems arise among critics is a sign that thought is very much alive. Critics are arguing and that is a good thing, because truth is born of argument. That Soviet critics and historians of literature are polemizing shows that they realize the importance of the tasks confronting them, and their responsibilities to the people in a country where literature forms part of public affairs.

EVGENI ALMAZOV

## A SOVIET HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

On the 220th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. the Academy's Gorky Institute of World Literature issued Book II of the first volume of the *History of English Literature*.<sup>1</sup> (Book I of this volume was published in 1943.)

This volume was compiled by literary scholars of Leningrad and Moscow. Its editors were Professor V. M. Zhirmunsky, Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences (Head of the Leningrad Branch of the Institute's Department of Western Literature), Professor M. P. Alexeyev (now Dean of the Faculty of Philology, Leningrad University), Professor A. K. Jivelev (Head of the Insti-

tute's Department of Western Literature), Professor I. I. Anisimov, Professor M. M. Morozov and A. A. Yelistratova, scientific workers at the Institute.

The articles which go to make up Book II were written by nine authors. Three of them are no longer with us: Mikhail Zabludovsky, who wrote the chapters on Jonathan Swift and Ben Jonson was killed in action, B. A. Kuzmin, who wrote the chapter on Goldsmith, died while serving in the Red Army, while M. N. Guthner died from the hardships of the Leningrad siege.

The book covers the period from Shakespeare to the end of the 18th century. Two centuries of intensive work by the best Russian translators has acquainted the reading public with the majority of the great figures of

<sup>1</sup> History of English Literature, Vol. I, Book II, Academy of Sciences, 1945, 694 pp.



this period. Many of the works of the 18th century writers, Pope, Defoe and Swift, were well known to the Russian reader during their lifetime.

The English poets of the middle of the 18th century inspired Zhukovsky and Karamzin; at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries Ossianism became one of the tendencies in Russian literature. Pushkin's Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*) was a studious reader of Richardson while Radishchev, the 18th century Russian revolutionary, was particularly fond of Sterne.

Shakespeare's works first became widely known at the beginning of the 19th century: every new period in the history of Russian literature during the 19th and 20th centuries produced new Shakespeare translations ranging from those of the romanticists Polevoi and Kroneberg to the Soviet translations of Lozinsky and Pasternak.

Over a dozen translations of Milton's poems made him popular in Russia in the 19th century.

Naturally the critics could not fail to be attracted by what had attracted the translators: Pushkin and Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov were great admirers of Shakespeare, Milton and the 18th century novelists. Russian literary scholars published more works on Shakespeare than on any other literary figure and in addition the works of Gervinus and other German scholars of Shakespeare, the compilations of Brandes, the works of Dowden and Koch were all translated into Russian. Russian scholars of Shakespeare—Chuiko, who did much to popularize Shakespeare, Storozhenko, a fine literary scholar, and, in the Soviet period, Axenov, Mirnov, Morozov and others, summarized the achievements of British scholars and then formed their own conceptions of Shakespeare's work. Their works also include critical studies of other Elizabethians.

New translations of the works of Defoe, Swift, Fielding, Smollett and Sterne were published in the twenties and thirties of the present century: each of these was accompanied by a more or less comprehensive introduction and observations. Literature on the English classics has now been enriched by a volume that will give the Soviet reader an opportunity to study the whole panorama of English literature of the 17th and 18th centuries.

The first chapter of the *History* is a magnificent picture of the great figure of Shakespeare drawn by Professor Mikhail Morozov, the leading Soviet authority on the playwright. Next come the other Elizabethan playwrights like a collection of miniatures grouped around the portrait of Ben Jonson. Towering above the metaphysicist poets in the chapter devoted especially to them is the gigantic figure of John Milton.

The literature of the Restoration has a chapter to itself where the reader meets the amusing free-thinker Butler, the pompous tragedies of Dryden and the rogues and flighty women of Wycherley. Then come the great 18th century novelists and the critic Samuel Johnson, and a special chapter on the playwrights of the century with Sheridan and Goldsmith as the leading figures.

Professor Zhirmunsky has a special chapter in the *History* dealing with the evolution of English poetry of the middle of the 18th century; he tells of Thomson and Gray, of their heartfelt lyricism, their simplicity and profound sincerity which are so difficult to reproduce in translation.

The mysterious world of the past created by the talented Macpherson and Chatterton and by the collections of ballads compiled by the antiquaries of literature is described in the chapter on the pre-romantic movement.

The book ends with Robert Burns, a poet well known to us through translations made in the 19th and 20th centuries, and through a Soviet edition of his poems in English.

The problem of the crisis in English humanism at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries is brought out in the *History* as a question of great historical importance: "At the time of the still undeveloped but constantly growing struggle between the increasing feudal, absolutist reaction and the Puritan bourgeois opposition, whose revolutionary mission could not have been clear to people in the early 17th century, the last humanists felt that the feudal tyranny and dissoluteness of the aristocratic free-thinkers and the puritanical 'piety' of the bourgeoisie were alike alien to them; they saw in the latter a mask which served to hide sin. The world seemed to them to be in a cul-de-sac and human life was a whirlwind of passion or a vale of tears."

Then the struggle came out into the open. The trumpets sounded at Naseby and Marston Moor and in the thunder of historic battles and the intricate struggle between parties and groups there developed that heroic period of the English bourgeois revolution which all the great minds of England, from Carlisle to Dickens, however great their differences of political opinion, never failed to admire.

The *History* treats of the ideological preparations for the revolution, characterizes that event and shows how revolutionary situations effect English literature: "The revolution and the Civil War divided the country into two hostile camps. Due to this a sharp social and political differentiation took place also in the field of literature ... The Royalist camp, however, did not produce a single important writer. The literature of the followers of the Stuarts was not distinguished either for its form or richness of ideological content; in general it shows merely a tendency to degenerate and decay."

"... The Puritan revolution produced the great poet Milton and the eminent prose writer Bunyan. Religious motifs predominate in the works of both these famous writers who came to the fore under the influence of the revolutionary, democratic Puritans. Behind traditional religious subjects, however, a new and profoundly modern content was hidden."

The *History* speaks of the place humanism occupies in English culture of the revolutionary period: "Although the Royalist Party claimed that it was the only heir to the culture of the Renaissance during the revolutionary period of the 17th century, this is disproved by the facts.

"It is true that a considerable part of the humanitarian intellectuals supported the

King and that the court was the centre of worldly culture ... The humanism of the court and the intellectuals, however, was a distorted, narrow imitation of the past without any ideals.

"Not in this camp are the real successors to the humanism of the Renaissance to be found. The real humanists were those intellectuals who took the side of the Puritan revolution ... These people adopted not only the outward signs of humanism but its whole content; they realized that being a humanist in their time meant helping to overthrow the feudal monarchy ... It was these writers who, continuing the best traditions of the literature of the past, made possible its development ..."

"The stormy events of the revolution for a time gave way to the years of the Restoration. The *History* tries to analyze the complicated literary life of the epoch, to give a true picture of the struggle going on between various tendencies and to show that "the internal ferment which occurred in English literature after the flourishing period of the Renaissance reaches its peak during these years of reaction. The work of every representative of aristocratic literature of any importance during the Restoration period bears the impress of an ideological and moral crisis ..."

Even this complicated process has its own main tendency; it is to be seen in the formation of the general lines of English classicism; "this classicism is very specific; it retains many of the features of the late Renaissance. Literature is still in a state of transition and for this reason many literary tendencies are still not given their final form ... Having no civic ideological content the classicism of English aristocratic literature of that period could not be anything more than an imitation of the ancient writers and a strict adherence to the three unities. The finest example of the classic tragedy of the period was not written by the Royalist Dryden but by the Republican Milton (*Samson Agonistes*)."

The second and bigger part of the book introduces the reader to the Enlighteners in English literature.

After giving a general outline of the period of Enlightenment in Europe and pointing out that it was brought about by the ideals of the "ardent defence of education, self-government and liberty," the book deals in detail with the Enlighteners in English literature.

The most important condition which determined the nature of the period of Enlightenment in English literature was the fact that it developed in a post-revolutionary England that was then undergoing a stormy economic evolution in the course of which the new features of capitalism appeared: this was hidden from the French Enlighteners whose work only prepared the way for the revolution. The book says that "benign, heroic Catos could not fail to be false in the England of Sir Robert Walpole, that the English Royalist Enlighteners did not, in the majority of cases, produce positive civic figures, which only serves to show their historical farsightedness and their feeling for artistic truth."

A special place amongst the great writers is given to Jonathan Swift—he "alone ... remains consistent in his satirical criticism of bourgeois progress which leads to his tragic disappointment in the 'reasonableness' of English reality and in the practical activity of the enlightening mind itself."

The section of the book—*Early 18th Century Literature*—begins with Pope and includes a review of journalism at the beginning of the century (Addison and Steele) and a special chapter on Defoe. It ends with Swift.

The next section—*Later 18th Century Literature*—embraces English literature of the "epoch of mature Enlightenment."

"Lofty humanism inspires English literature of this period. Realistic honesty in portraying human weaknesses, sins and failings is combined by the English democratic writers of the period with a profound respect for the 'abilities, intellect, will-power and energy that nature has given to man.' It is this enlightened respect for, and faith in, human nature that produces the all-conquering optimism which is so characteristic of the work of the majority of the English Realist-Enlighteners of the 18th century."

The chapters of this section give a thorough analytical history of the English novel in the middle of the century: the reader is introduced to the work and the specific features of Richardson, Fielding and Smollett, the English 18th century theatre and Dr. Samuel Johnson. In addition to the realistic tendencies, however, which later enriched all European literature, we see a new group of tendencies united under the general conception of sentimentalism.

This is how it is characterized: "Sentimentalism is an all-European phenomenon. In some countries earlier, in others later, and under various names, sentimentalism takes form within the literature of Enlightenment as a new literary tendency and by the end of the 18th century becomes the dominating trend; it is a new phase of the European Enlightenment which directly precedes the French Revolution of 1789."

The sentimentalists continue and deepen the anti-feudal strivings of the Enlighteners but at the same time begin to doubt the early Enlighteners' optimistic conception of bourgeois progress and the Enlighteners' rationalism itself. Only a man who lives mainly by his sensations could, said the sentimentalists, feel sincere compassion for the sufferings of the masses groaning under the double yoke of moribund feudal and newly-born bourgeois relations.

This section of the book includes Goldsmith, Sterne and the poets of the middle of the century, Thomson, Shenstone, Young, Gray and Grabbe.

The last section of the book—*Pre-romantic Tendencies in 18th Century Literature*—begins with a chapter on the crisis in the world outlook of the Enlighteners, its causes and nature. "England in the 18th century already experienced the contradiction of bourgeois development and in the second half of the century entered into the industrial revolution which sharpened these contradictions to the extreme. The crisis in the world outlook of the Enlighteners, therefore, began im-



England earlier than in other European countries. In the second half of the 18th century new literary tendencies are clearly seen: we combine these new tendencies under the heading of "pre-romanticism."

The book is not a compilation, a collection of papers. It is a reflection of the literary process, a strictly scientific analysis of historical and literary development.

A number of problems are handled in a new way, the literary struggle of the revolutionary years and English classicism find new treatment, the literary facts of the period of Enlightenment, sentimentalism and pre-romanticism are classified in their proper periods and the dialectics of literary development are shown.

The analysis of questions of esthetics in 18th century literary tendencies is profound and comprehensive.

In speaking of the faults of the book it is to be regretted that no bibliographical data has been provided and that there are some defects in the composition. The chapter on Shakespeare and his contemporaries should, of course, have been included in the first book of volume I and the present book should have begun with the revolutionary epoch.

Some criticism must also be made of the structure of the various chapters of the book. For example in the chapter *The Last Stage*

of the *Development of Renaissance Drama* it is impossible to follow the general literary process in a series of elegant characterizations.

In the lengthy chapter on Shakespeare the relation of the content of the plays occupies forty pages while the *General Characteristic of Shakespeare's Work* consists of nine pages only.

In other cases the biographies of the writers occupy very considerable space (Ben Jonson) while in others the biography is almost entirely ignored (Shakespeare).

In the chapter on Sterne we read that his "language is flexible and emotional in a new way as compared with that of his predecessors," that is, the writers of the 18th century, although their language is dealt with even less precisely than that of Sterne. This neglect of the question of a writer's language is one of the more serious defects of the book.

Then, too, the pages which analyze the connections between English literature and that of other countries of Europe are not always to the point.

Despite these and a number of lesser sins, the appearance of the work of the group of authors of the Gorky Institute of World Literature is an important event for Soviet students of literature.

ROMAN SAMARIN

## NEW BOOKS

### A NEW ANTHOLOGY OF POEMS BY PASTERNAK

Boris Pasternak—*Selected Verse and Poems*. State Literary Publishing House, 1945.

This collection includes poems from earlier volumes: *Above the Barriers* (1917), *Life Is My Sister* (1922); two poems (1925—1926) entitled *Nineteen Hundred and Five* and *Lieutenant Schmidt*, which deal with the 1905 Revolution; love poems from the collection *Second Birth* (1932) and poems of more recent years, most of which appeared in Pasternak's latest book *Aboard the Early Trains*.

The attentive reader will notice in the old familiar poems variations in rhyme and changes of text. Pasternak is continually revising poems already published, a fact which will mean more work for future students of his creative art.

The reader of the new collection will certainly be attracted by Pasternak's latest poems. What are possibly his most serene compositions, *Summer Day*, *Pines* and *Hoar Frost*, were written at the end of the war. These exist side by side with the verses charged with anger and alarm evoked by the war against fascism.

Not one line, even in the poems written during the ominous year of 1941 betray the slightest doubt in ultimate victory or expresses the possibility that the morale of the Soviet people might falter under the storm. In a number of verses of a narrative character, which seem to serve as outlines for future works, the writer draws on scenes from

army life. (*The Death of a Sapper, Scouts, Pursuit*). In *Spring*, the last of the cycle of war poems, written in 1944 when victory stood clearly before the Soviet people, the poet conveys the splendid emotions gripping him on the threshold of triumph and peace.

### A NOVEL ON THE DEFENCE OF MOSCOW

Alexander Bek—*The Volokolamsk Highway*. Soviet Writer Publishing House, Moscow, 1945.

One of the main drives of the German offensive on Moscow in 1941 followed the Volokolamsk Highway. Here their way was barred by Major-General Panfilov's 316th Infantry Division, subsequently renamed the Eighth Guards Division. One of its units was the battalion commanded by Senior Lieutenant Baurjan Momyshev.

Alexander Bek's account of Lieutenant Baurjan's story<sup>1</sup> describing the operations of his battalion, goes beyond the limits of war journalism. While composing his book on actual facts this practised writer has not neglected the artistic aspect. For this reason readers and critics alike have voted Bek's story to be one of the most realistic accounts of the war with Germany.

Henri Barbusse considered his book *Fire* the diary of a platoon; in the same way *The Volokolamsk Highway* is the diary of

<sup>1</sup> For an abbreviated version of Bek's novel see *International Literature* No. 4, 1944.

a battalion. The first section relates how the battalion was formed, describes its training and its first brush with the Germans while the second part deals with the desperate fighting for the Volokolamsk Highway.

Bek's book is the story of how Momysh-uly acquired the art of warfare. He has a fund of native resource and a way of promptly finding his bearings in the most complicated situations. Our officer is an able pupil of Major-General Panfilov, an excellent exponent of Suvorov's precepts in modern warfare. Panfilov always began with the assumption that the human element is decisive in battle. The commander must therefore strain every effort not only to win but also to preserve the lives of his men who go into battle not to die but to live.

Baurjan's quality as a commander is well displayed in the following episode.

The battalion had Germans not only ahead of them, but to the right, left and behind. Just a narrow strip of land linked the battalion with the main Red Army forces. The chief of staff prepared to withdraw from this encirclement, for the alternative was death. But the battalion commander had no orders to pull out. He knew that regimental headquarters had withdrawn, communications were disrupted, so there was not much chance of receiving instructions. Momysh-uly decided: "We'll fight inside the ring ..." The battalion dug in. The men would fight to the last cartridge (preserving the very last for themselves). By remaining behind the German frontlines the battalion would impede the enemy's advance. The battalion fought through the thick of the enemy, inflicting heavy losses as it went, and finally contacted the main forces of its own division at Volokolamsk.

Baurjan Momysh-uly, a true son of the Kazakh people, is steeped in their many centuries of folk wisdom. His masterful leadership combines in it the best traditions of the Russian people and those of his own people of Kazakhstan. His soldier's morale finds perfect expression in the Kazakh proverbs that Baurjan loves to recall: "The enemy is frightful until you've tasted his blood"; "You can kill one with your bayonet, a thousand with your head"; "Honour is more powerful than Death." And "The hare dies from the rustling of reeds, the hero for honour." But what is honour? "Honour is victory."

#### A PLAY ABOUT DARWIN

Leonid Rakhmanov—*The Hermit of the Downs*. A dramatic narrative about Charles Darwin in nine scenes.

Leonid Rakhmanov's play portrays the most exciting years of Darwin's life, the publication of his *Origin of Species* and the terrific verbal battle that followed it. The characters are Darwin, his wife and children, and famous contemporary scientists who rallied round Darwin when his great work was published,—Charles Lyell, the geologist, Joseph Hooker, the botanist and Alfred Wallace the traveller and naturalist. The last scenes bring Darwin's followers into prominence—the Englishman Thomas Huxley and the Russian Kliment Timiryazev, who were

destined to play a prominent part in subsequent years. There are also a number of minor characters in the play who provide the social and home background.

The opening scenes show Darwin in the seclusion of his country residence, engrossed in the experiments which were to confirm the theory he had already held for many years—the theory providing a materialistic explanation of the evolution of animate nature. Darwin is portrayed as a man of exceptional charm, modesty and simplicity. His nobility as a scientist is especially well manifested in one episode, when owing to a chain of fortuitous circumstances, Wallace, the naturalist, a scientist far inferior to Darwin, reaches conclusions akin to his theory and snatches, as it were, the priority from Darwin. The playwright focuses attention on this episode and shows how Darwin emerges from this test with flying colours, actuated throughout by the interests of science, never by personal ambition.

• An important feature in the play is the conflict between Darwin's teaching and the prevailing religious views. Scene 8 reproduces the famous dispute of 1860 between the pro- and anti-Darwinists at Oxford, where Darwin's views were attacked by the important Bishop Wilberforce who later received a merciless trouncing from young Huxley. The reactions of the public at the debate are represented in lively style—the sallies exchanged by the supporters of both sides, the heated atmosphere of a sharp clash of ideas. In the concluding scene the author arranges an imaginary meeting between Darwin and Timiryazev, the student destined to become the beacon-light of Russian biology and the boldest and most consistent advocate of Darwin's great scientific revolution. This meeting takes place at the seaside where Darwin is on holiday. The waves roar as the tide comes in. Timiryazev snatches off his hat and says to Darwin, his tones full of admiration and gratitude: "Thanks to you I did not miss the rising tide." He refers to the rising tide of knowledge.

#### A BOOK BY A GEORGIAN CROWN PRINCE

Crown Prince Ioann of Georgia—*Kalmasoba*. Translated from the Georgian into Russian by Varlam Dondua. *Dawn of the East* Publishing House, Tbilisi. 1945.

Crown Prince Ioann of Georgia who lived at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, was a clever military leader, who, in 1795, defended Tbilisi against the army of Aga Mahomet Khan. He was also an outstanding statesman, a man of letters and scientist. In 1801 he settled in St. Petersburg and concentrated on literary work. He spent fifteen years writing *Kalmasoba*, a book ranking high in Georgian literature.

Kalmasoba is a Georgian word that may be translated as "collective donations." In this work, written in the form of a diary, the author has taken as his chief characters Ioann Helashvili, a wandering friar, and the shrewd, jolly Zuraba Gamberashvili. Travelling through Georgian towns and villages collecting contributions for the monastery,



the heroes encounter various types of people, visit the palace of the prince and the hovels of the poor and attend both feasts and classroom lectures... The book unfolds to the reader a picture of the habits, customs and life of the epoch. The work contains substantial information on history, botany, astronomy, geography, medicine, music, mathematics, poetry and the military art of Georgia. In this sense the Georgian prince has stolen a march as it were on modern popular-science books. There is many an amusing tale, witty scene and exciting episode cleverly interwoven in the text. The modern reader sees the author of *Kalmasoba* as a humanist in the ideological vanguard of his time, a supporter of the progressive ideas of the Encyclopedists of the 18th century.

## RUSSIAN CULTURE AND EUROPE

K. Muratova and E. Privalova—*World Importance of Russian Literature and Russian Art*. Annotated bibliography. Published by the State Public Library in Leningrad.

Russian literature is an integral part of Western civilisation. Besides gaining much from the West it has also given much, making its own significant contribution. This book by Muratova and Privalova contains a wealth of material bearing witness to the influence of Russian literature and art on the culture of Europe and America.

The opening essay arranges in chronological order the observations of outstanding representatives of Western culture on what Russian art has meant to them personally and for the West in general.

The first section enumerates investigations and magazine articles dealing with the general questions of the relationship of Russian literature and cultural processes to those of the West. The following section is devoted to the latest Soviet researches into the friendships between Goethe, Madame de Staël, Hugo, Mérimée, Balzac, Zola, Mickiewicz and others with men of letters in Russia. Next follows a section on *Russian Literature in Europe, in America and in the East*. The list of eighteen names includes Krylov, the writer of fables, Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenyev, Dostoyevsky, Leo Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky and Mayakovsky. This is the longest chapter and indexes over two hundred books and articles by foreign authors on these writers.

The last chapter shows how Soviet literature is regarded through the eyes of Western critics.

The final section of the index is assigned to the Russian drama, ballet, music, the fine arts and the cinema.

In conclusion the authors give a brief chronological review, outlining the steady growth of the popularity of Russian culture in the West from the beginning of the 19th century to the present time.

The bibliography by Muratova and Privalova reflects various facts showing the personal ties between Russian and foreign writers, the appearance of the most important works in cultural ties and the translation of Russian books in the capitals of Europe and America, the leading criticisms reflecting

public opinion in those countries and additional material.

The present directory is the first effort of its kind. So far the authors have confined themselves to foreign comments already translated into Russian and, in the preface, make a special point of noting its incomplete and preliminary character. Nevertheless, even in its present form the book is of use, both to the Russian and the foreign investigator working on the subject of the bonds of Russian culture with the cultures of other countries.

## THE HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

G. Vinokur—*The Russian Language*. State Literary Publishing House, 1945.

In his book Professor Vinokur happily blends faultless precision of scientific definition with vivid and direct ideological and esthetical evaluation and interpretation; it is a scientifically based and at the same time interesting story of what a vast cultural, historical and art content is to be found in the concept of the "Russian language."

The book begins with the essential information on the origin of Russian and the place it occupies in the family of Slav tongues, and the dialects of which it is composed. The reader is acquainted with the times when writing first appeared in Russia, obtains a lively and graphic idea of the ancient manuscripts still in existence and is introduced to the basic phonetic and grammatical differences between ancient and modern Russian.

In this small and popular work Professor Vinokur naturally does not claim to explain all the obscure and contradictory processes of the formation of the Russian literary language. He gives us only a number of wide and vivid outlines, staking the main milestones of the process. But the most important item in this general and sweeping outline is the clear and convincing emergence of the inner meaning of the many centuries of development of the language, from the subtle and refined oratory of the Byzantine era in the 11th century to Pushkin, Chekhov and Mayakovsky.

The reader gains a picture of an original tug-of-war between two language tendencies: the literary style going back to the ancient Slav traditions and the living people's everyday language. These two sources enter various contacts, now mutually attracting each other, now repelling; the result was the complex, yet monolithic whole which is the modern literary tongue.

At the same time Vinokur traces the fate of various styles of speech—the church, business and literary art styles, each of which in certain epochs played a special role in moulding the general national language form.

In this way, the history of the language is presented not as an abstract evolution of form and sounds but as a tangible process historically conceived, linked with the general development of culture in Russia.

The author's method of presentation is excellent. He deliberately avoids a too specific linguistic analysis. Excerpts from manuscripts, religious manuals, every possible kind of business document, not to men-

tion literary works, excerpts ably chosen and well analyzed, give the reader an extraordinarily palpable idea of all the splendour and wealth of the Russian language.

#### SKETCHES MADE BY A POET

Abram Efros—*Pushkin's Self-portraits*. Published by the State Literary Museum.

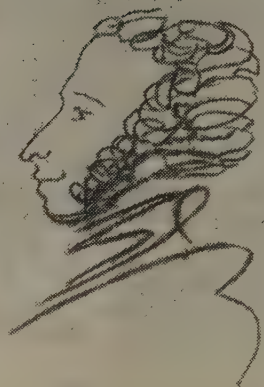
Pushkin's manuscripts are interspersed with hundreds of sketches. There are landscapes and figures, but chiefly portraits, including quite a number of self-portraits.

The sketches Pushkin made in his concluding years draw the concentrated attention of the research workers. "There is no other writer in the history of literature," writes Efros, "whose work as an artist of words was so inextricably interwoven with the use of sketches to reinforce the image."

Sketching came naturally to Pushkin as he worked over his copy. They came into his head in direct or indirect connection with the text, and he drew them right there on the margin or between the lines. The profiles in Pushkin's manuscripts form a veritable gallery of his contemporaries. Many of them have been recognized and in a number of cases have, in conjunction with the accompanying text, cleared up hazy and disputed matters in the life and work of the poet.

Of all the sketches the author gives first place to Pushkin's portraits of himself and considers that in artistic and documentary value, they can be compared only to the self-portraits of Baudelaire. They are extremely varied. Pushkin sketched himself as a young man, then as if reflected in the mirror; imagined himself as though older, even decrepit; changing the period, he pictured himself as a man of another epoch (sketches, for instance, in which he depicted himself as a participator in the French Revolution).

Analyzing the self-portraits in detail the author stresses their significance as an important source for biographers and attempts to interpret them as the expression of various



*A drawing of Pushkin*

stages in Pushkin's awareness of himself as man and poet. The author especially stresses the artistic value of Pushkin's self-portraits, which although done by an amateur, are yet unsurpassed as likenesses of the poet even when compared with the portraits of him by first class painters like Kiprensky and Tropinin. In this connection he singles out that excellent sketch of Pushkin done in 1829 in what is known as the Ushakov Album; the drawing combines vitality, likeness to the original and beauty of execution. The book carries fifty-five reproductions of Pushkin's self-portraits.

#### A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF MUSIC

G. Chkhikvadze—*The History of Georgian Music*. Georgia's Music from Ancient Times to the Beginning of the 19th Century.

The author proves by a profound study of Georgian folk songs that the ancient tribes of Georgia had highly developed vocal and instrumental music.

Exceedingly interesting is the problem the author has elaborated of the interconnection of religious song in heathen and Christian times. A special chapter is devoted to investigation of how Georgian folk polyphony arose (two, three and six-part singing). The author has gathered the long list of names of instruments from Shota Rust'veli's ancient poem *The Knight in the Tiger Skin* which shows what a high level Georgian instrumental music had reached by the 12th century.

The pages dealing with the music of subsequent centuries also reveal many formerly little-known facts.

Chkhikvadze's research brings out the wealth of the Georgian people's music, displays the age-old nature of its history and is a valuable contribution to the history of music.



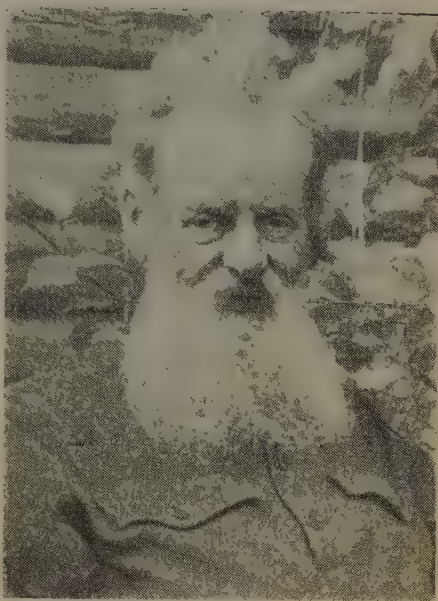
*A drawing of Pushkin (on his way to Erzurum)*



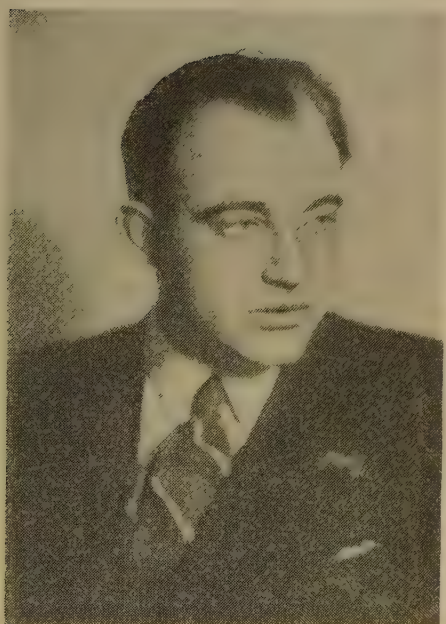
SOVIET WRITERS ELECTED TO THE SUPREME SOVIET  
OF THE U.S.S.R.



CONSTANTINE SIMONOV



PAVEL BAZHOV



ALEXANDER KORNEICHUK



FYODOR PANFEROV

## CONSTANTINE YUON

*Half a century of painting**"The Actress Turchaninova." By C. Yuon*

When Ilya Repin was shown reproductions in colour of Constantine Yuon's work, he studied them attentively and said at last: "They're wonderful—wonderful," and there was profound conviction in his tone. He added: "And how remarkably Russian this Yuon is!"

The exhibition of Yuon's work, held in connection with the celebration of his half-century of painting, brings Repin's words to mind. Yuon was seventy this year and his birthday was also the fiftieth anniversary of the launching of his career as an artist; the Soviet Government awarded him the highest decoration in this country: the Order of Lenin.

He paints landscapes and portraits, designs stage-settings and teaches. He is also an art critic.

He studied under Serov, to whom, he says, he owes more than to anyone else.

On his first visits to foreign countries he saw the work of the Impressionists. He has expressed his attitude to them: "The Impressionist movement which aroused the interest of all progressive art in Europe at that time, attracted me but not for very long. I felt drawn towards Russian national forms, the images of the past, the ideas of the people's art cultivated by 'The Travellers'<sup>1</sup> and this helped me to

strike a balance. It taught me to turn to the Impressionists only for what could enrich my palette and bring precision into my perception of the colourful abundance of the world I observed around me, but never to permit Impressionism to become an aim in itself."

The salient characteristics of his style are realism, harmony of simple and clearcut forms, picturesque colouring; these are invariably combined in his work with a sense of the Russian national spirit.

New form-colour and composition have been the object of his unceasing search for fifty years. There is no repetition or self-reproduction in his paintings.

"My search for new beauties," Yuon wrote, "for new colours and the new conceptions that were aroused in me, led me to the ancient Russian towns that I love, to the Russian provinces; I sought new tints in nature, in the Russian winter and spring, summer and autumn. I found them in the sunlight of my own country, and in the Russian people."

From his early youth he has always been a keen student of architecture. With a masterly touch he conveys the atmosphere of the old Russian towns, the beauty of an ancient Kremlin or monastery walls, the grimness of the watch-towers, the richness of the churches with their many-coloured or gilded cupolas, the homely suburbs with their medley of buildings.

The charm of the old buildings and the ensembles of the old Russian towns—Troitse-Sergiyev, Uglich, Novgorod and Pskov—is conveyed in his pictures with unusual mastery.

"The architectonic nature of my work led me to seek my subjects in the old Russian towns, kremlins, monasteries, suburbs and in broken country of interesting and varied planes. In such subjects I sought to satisfy my thirst for combinations and juxtapositions in lines, mass, contrasts and also my thirst for 'building up in colour'."

This artist displays consummate tact in his introduction of living groups into his landscapes and architectural paintings. In his canvases the rhythm of the architecture harmonizes with the movement of the figures, the gallop of the horses, the flight of birds against the blue.

Against the background of the ancient town of Uglich and a church on a hillside, the swift-moving sleigh with its three horses whips the whole springtime landscape into dynamic life.

One of the most memorable of Yuon's pictures is "Cupola and Swallows."

The foreground is occupied by one of the five cupolas of a church, the horizon, which is very low, leads the eye into infinite distances, and across the sky with its pale transparent

<sup>1</sup> "The Travellers" was the name given to a group of realists of the late 19th century. This group represented the advanced democratic trend in Russian art and united in an association of travelling art exhibitions — *Ed.*





*"Cupola and Swallows." By C. Yuon*

clouds, hundreds of swallows fly. Here again in the combination of the rhythmic tranquillity of the architectural motif and the swiftness of the swallows' flight, Yuon has created a composition of unforgettable charm.

He has painted many pictures of his native Moscow; they are of all periods, from his earliest "Lubyanskaya Square," painted forty years ago, to "Night Salute in the Red Square" painted 1945. Most of these canvases show the Kremlin or the Cathedral of St. Basil, the walls and ensemble of the Novo-Deviichi Convent, all colourful and decorative in their own way.

His landscapes belong to the second cycle. He looks at the Russian countryside through the eyes of an artist who feels a deep and sincere sympathy for it. His treatment of the colour problems differs from that of Levitan, who is unsurpassed in his lyrical painting of Russian scenes.

Unlike Levitan, who had a strong preference for softened colouring and avoided the vivid and striking, Yuon shows no fear of startling contrasts and strives for rich variety of colours.

"I have sometimes experienced a state of sheer exultation," he writes, "produced by the music of colour-symphonies created by the play of spring sunlight on that most sensitive and acutely perceptive material—pure snow." He has succeeded best with the embodiment of these "colour symphonies" in his beautiful landscapes "Spring Is Coming," "March Sunlight," "A Day in May," "Winter Sunshine,"

and "The Blue Winter's Day." Now, at seventy years of age, he is painting "Winter Morning" which shows a different treatment of his silvery-blues, and contrasting warm rose-violet tones.

He is attached to certain colours and loves to find innumerable shades of them and use them in various ways. He is a virtuoso in the use of blues in his spring and winter subjects, with dazzling blue-tinted snows, misty blue distances, shadows against which the delicately-white trunks of silver birches stand out, and the ethereal transparent blue of the spring sky.

The Volga distances have often attracted Yuon. When he paints a series of canvases which have for their subjects the wharves at Nizhni-Novgorod (Gorky), he creates an expressive image of the grandest of the Russian rivers and the hard work of those who people its banks.

The Russian provinces with their picturesque and colourful life have always had a fascination for this artist. His bazaars, country fairs, scenes in market-places, holiday-making and family life in the towns and villages have an appealing sincerity, and are painted with love and understanding of his people.

His gallery of portraits is large. Those of the artist's son, and recent portraits of the actresses Turchaninova and Ilyina are particularly interesting. The pencil drawings of N. Zelin-sky, the Academician, of the poet Aseyev, of N. Meshcheryakov and A. Bakhrushin have a living, convincing quality.

The artist is always in close touch with his time; many of his pictures reflect Soviet life. "In Those Days" is a water-colour of the House of Trade Unions at the time of Lenin's funeral. That frosty January day in 1924 thousands crowded to this building to pay their last respects to their leader and teacher. The emotion of the throng is conveyed in Yuon's picture.

"Morning in Moscow, Winter 1942," and the picture of the Red Army parade in the Red Square on November 7th, 1941, are painted with feeling and sympathy. In the first the units are crossing the bridge over the river; in the background rises the Kremlin and the Cathedral of St. Basil, with the pale winter sunlight illumining the snow on roofs and walls.

"Before Entering the Kremlin" and "At Troitsky Gate" are episodes in the Revolution of October 1917. "Students," "Youth," "The Cooperative Holiday in the Village," and "YCL Nurses" are pictures of the young people whom he loves so well.

This great variety of pictures on subjects from Soviet life shows how Soviet reality was in resonance with his creative outlook and we see how his creative work was in resonance with that reality.

He has a gift for designing theatre settings. His sketches for Mussorgsky's opera *Boris Godounov*, presented at a Paris theatre

in 1912-1913, is his first successful attempt to apply his gifts in this field. His sketches for Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina*, produced at the Bolshoi Theatre in 1904, have historic faithfulness, richness, and a fine range of decorative colour. But the artist was more attracted to the dramatic than to the operatic stage. For the last twenty-five years he has been connected with the Maly, where the traditions of Russian realistic drama and comedy are preserved. Outstanding examples of Russian theatre settings are those he designed for Alexander Ostrovsky's plays: *Easy Money*, *Enough Simplicity in Every Wise Man*, Gogol's *Inspector-General*, and also for Gorky's *Yegor Bulychev* at the Art Theatre.

As a teacher he has always upheld the principle of realism and insisted on clearcut, strong drawing. He has followed Serov's formula: "It is better to have what is good in the old discerned through the new." Many of Yuon's pupils who have made a name for themselves, as, for example, Vera Mukhina, the sculptor, owe much in the development and the strengthening of their gifts to the realistic trend they acquired under Yuon's teaching.

The artist is seventy now, but he has an upright figure, his eye is keen, his energy is unflagging. His latest pictures have lost nothing of the freshness of colour, originality and boldness in composition of his earlier work.

IVAN LAZAREVSKY



"Morning in Moscow, Winter 1942." By C. Yuon



## "CINDERELLA" AT THE BOLSHOI THEATRE

A new ballet, *Cinderella*, by one of the greatest modern composers, Sergei Prokofyev, has been staged by the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre. The libretto is based on the fairy tale which exists in one form or another in the folklore of nearly every nation and which gained its greatest popularity in Charles Perrault's literary version.

Nikolai Volkov who wrote the libretto, has introduced a number of changes in the development of the fairy tale. His libretto reveals the kindness of Cinderella's pure heart more than Perrault's version did. Cinderella is visited at her home by the good fairy dressed as a beggar woman who tries the girl's heart. Only after Cinderella has passed the test, does the fairy reward her with miraculous gifts. Perrault's fairy tale ends with Cinderella as a princess, who forgets the wrongs she has suffered and marries off her wicked sisters to courtiers. The finale of the ballet *Cinderella* shows the triumph of love, while the fate of Cinderella's contemptible sisters loses all significance. All direct moral lessons are eliminated and supplanted by the ideas of the joy of living and the triumph of happiness and love.

2

Sergei Prokofyev's music is interesting and original, and the composer's native talent has found full expression. During the past few years the lyrical motive has become ever more pronounced in Prokofyev's compositions. In *Cinderella* the two basic musical themes—those of love and kindness triumphant—are melodious and full of dramatic force. Here Prokofyev's music attains its full breadth and freedom.

In order to portray the world of fantasy into which Cinderella enters by the will of the fairy, Prokofyev makes use of his characteristic complex harmonies which contain something of "a tragic fairy tale for adults." The composer's ingenuity is particularly good wherever he is able to display musical grotesques and fine, witty characteristics. His sprightly, pronounced and tangled rhythms give rise to characters which one can really feel without actually seeing their embodiment on the stage. Prokofyev has treated the musical image of the prince in an original way, enabling the dancer to avoid the usual mask of a ballet lover. The prince is shown as a strong daring youth, and his dance melodies are powerful and free.

The ideas and emotions pervading Prokofyev's music make Perrault's fairy tale clear in comparison. And in this sense Prokofyev follows the traditions of Russian ballet music, the music of Chaikovsky and Glazunov; the lofty moral theme which determines *Swan Lake* or *Raymonda* also applies to *Cinderella*.

Yuri Faier conducts *Cinderella* at the Bolshoi Theatre. Rhythmical precision, so important in presenting a ballet, added to the conductor's typical comprehension of the composer's ideas, are apparent in this production.

3

*Cinderella* has been staged by the ballet-master Rostislav Zakharov, who strove to attain organic unity between pantomime and the dance. Zakharov's art is characteristic in that it never alternates "dancing" and "pantomime" episodes, but is a fusion of dance and expression in each movement. In this respect Prokofyev's music offers an unusually rich background.

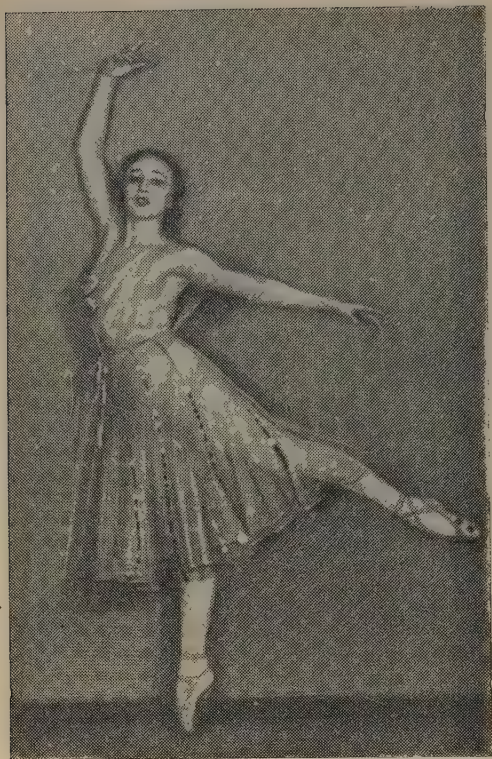
In *Cinderella* Zakharov has been successful with the dances of the majority of the characters. The first act introduces the step-mother and her favourite daughters. Victorina Krieger, the famous ballerina, is the step-mother. With great skill she conveys the biting irony of Prokofyev's music, embodying the character of a quarrelsome, jealous and cruel woman, whose cold heart is full of vanity and greed. Victorina Krieger has created a satirical image which is witty and brilliant in conception. In the finale when the step-mother attempts to try on the glass slipper and wants to cut off a piece of her foot with enormous scissors, Victorina Krieger displays animal fear combined with greed, vanity and stubbornness which overcome all other emotions—and the character is complete.

Prokofyev's musical treatment makes of Cinderella's pampered sisters, whose parts are danced by Shmelkina and Lazarevich, vicious and uncouth girls. But an artistic sense of proportion and of genre makes these actresses refrain from what might have been vulgar grotesque.

The appearance of the dancing master is one of the cleverest scenes in the ballet. V. Tsaplin has created an affected character with all the irony that is peculiar to Prokofyev's music.

... And now the fairy appears before Cinderella, opening a great and beautiful world before the girl as a reward for her pure heart. Cinderella is taken to the land of miracles, where Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter present Cinderella with ornaments for the ball. In these four introductory episodes the ballet-master somehow failed to find that inspired sublimeness which would create a sharp and outspoken contrast to the entire "worldly" part of the ballet. In Spring the main role is danced by Gottlieb. In Summer, the talented Bogolyubskaya and Khomyakov appear. Khomyakov's brilliant technique and plasticity enabled him to create an eccentric but graceful image of a Grasshopper leaping through the air... In Autumn we were once more captivated by the young ballet dancer Maya Plisetskaya. She dances her brief role in Autumn against a background of rain; her vibrating arms and flexible body convey the trembling of a leaf swept from the ground, while the actresses of the corps de ballet, accompanying her, rise and fall like autumn leaves driven before the wind... Winter is played by Cherkassova... All these scenes are too conventional and not sufficiently well-connected with the general nature of the performance, where fantasy seems to be





*Ulanova as Cinderella*

real, or with the image of the ingenuous Cinderella.

Peter Williams, the artist, deserves warm praise. The fairy, played by Abramova, tells Cinderella of the miraculous powers of the old clock and shows her the Milky Way. The outlines of an enormous, ancient clock rise from the darkness and from its face twelve gnomes run down and surround Cinderella ... Then come the starry heavens and the Milky Way all done in luminous colours ... This scene combines fairyland fantasy, music and theatrical art.

... Act II of the ballet opens with the ballroom scene at court. The whole of the back scene represents a mirror "painted" on tulle. The courtiers dance in front of it and behind the tulle mirror their reflections are seen as through a light haze: these reflections are ballet dancers who double every step and turn of their counterparts in front. This is indeed a mirror of miracles and a truly splendid example of theatrical art.

The costumes in this scene are gorgeous. Peter Williams has managed to produce the impression that the ladies' crinolines and the courtiers' waistcoats are made of porcelain and not of ordinary multi-coloured cloth. Striking costumes are also worn by the foreign guests from India, China and Spain. The oft-repeated simple movements of the mass dances emphasize the stiffness and affectation of the court festival.

In the role of Jester Asaf Messerer again displays his virtuosity and his leaps through the air preserve all the strength and ease.

... Gabovich and Preobrazhensky dance the part of the Prince. Gabovich's performance makes the Prince a passionate, arrogant youth and in his movements the young man's daring and ambition are felt. His every movement is that of a man used to being obeyed. In Preobrazhensky's portrayal the Prince is more gentle and mischievous; when he dances the solo variation at the ball, one feels how glad he is to be young. Gabovich's Prince never forgets that he gives orders to all the people about him.

At the ball the Prince and Cinderella dance an adagio ... The stage is empty, the palatial hall is transformed into a garden. Deep violet and blue prevail in the scale of colours as darkness falls. For this adagio the ballet-master has found much grace, full of beauty and true lyricism. Here, as in his other creations, he has attained great subtlety of detail. During the adagio the Prince offers Cinderella a golden crown which he wishes to place on her head. She refuses the Prince's gift, the highest expression of his love for her. The crown becomes a mere incidental object which unites their hands; when the lyrical adagio is drawing to its close the Prince almost has Cinderella in his embrace. She stands close to him; their hands, which lightly grasp the crown, fall. Motionless, in their longing for each other, they forget the crown ... Thus the ballet-master has found an unexpected way of describing the power of love, which needs no glamour, no regal grandeur ...

It is unfortunate that the Prince's image has hardly been developed except for this scene,



*Lepeshinskaya as Cinderella, with Gabovich as the Prince*



here his movements become softer and acquire warmth and restraint, revealing the first awakening of love. Because the Prince's wanderings in search of Cinderella are shown grotesquely, his love for her in the third act loses some of its charm. It is impossible under these circumstances to show that the Prince, under the influence of love, has become a better person.

... The second act winds up with Cinderella's flight. Here the musical motive of the clock reaches a stupendous, almost tragic height. The entire theatre is filled with a note of alarm as the clock strikes and Cinderella flees. An enfilade of palatial rooms leads before the fleeing Cinderella: dark, long hallways, massive columns and big staircases. Tiny black gnomes holding phosphorescent clock figures in their hands dance in front of her ... Here the ballet-master and the artist once more combine their art with the composer's music, lending themselves to the style of the fairy tale *Cinderella*. There is a steady rise in dramatic tension as the second act draws to a close. One feels with a premonition of catastrophe and coming joy which rings in the orchestra's final chord as the prince finds Cinderella's lost slipper.

As the curtain rises on the third act, the prince, standing beside a globe, resolves to search for Cinderella the world over. The prince's wanderings are grotesque and at times primitive. The prince jumps out of the window; in order to watch him his courtiers lean out of the window, lying on the table with their backs to the audience, jangling their legs ...

The fault here lies with the libretto, which plays an insufficiently fine sense of style. Some of the episodes are interesting for their underlying idea, but they give ground for excessive deviations. Thus, when the author of the libretto makes the prince search for the vanished beauty in various countries to emphasize the power of his love, the integ-

rity of the ballet style is not maintained, because the places where the prince's wanderings take him fail to correspond in colouring to the style of the fairy tale.

Scenes laid in Andalusia, in the East and among the savages follow each other. All of them are brilliant and well defined musically. Whenever the prince makes his appearance the theme is expressed strikingly and again grotesquely in the furious dashing movements of the maddened prince ... True, the Andalusia scene has been solved by the ballet-master with originality and good taste, but the scene in the East is done in the routine manner (how often have we seen the snake dance used to symbolize the East), and the scene among the savages is as vulgar as a music hall burlesque. And despite the good qualities each scene may possess, they all are alien to Cinderella and all of them violate the integrity of the play.

4

Olga Lepeshinskaya and Galina Ulanova dance the part of Cinderella. As far as Lepeshinskaya is concerned, she is free to interpret her favourite theme, one which forms the foundation of her art, the victorious force of life, unrestrained joy, youth which rejoices as it participates in the brilliant festival. And the dancer confines her exceptional technique to this theme. At the beginning of the ballet Lepeshinskaya is reserved, but every "intonation" of movement contains a certain pulsation which seems any minute ready to break out into a tempestuous cascade of movement and emotion. At the same time when Lepeshinskaya's Cinderella encounters evil, her movements and facial expression betray a high degree of bewilderment; and one senses how easy it would be to cause her pain. But these moods pass as rapidly as they arise and again Lepeshinskaya is ready to rejoice in life.

One might suspect that Lepeshinskaya's Cinderella is not sufficiently deep emotion-



CINDERELLA. Act II. The palace

ally but for the fact that her feeling of joy is so passionate.

Cinderella easily accepts the gifts of the four seasons. When the Milky Way opens before her, she appears to have seen it before. She is not frightened, but accepts with ease the supernatural power of the clock. She feels unconstrained in this fairy-tale world. And when surrounded by the stars, actresses of the corps de ballet, Lepeshinskaya's light, "airy" leaps are full of force and spirit.

From the moment of Cinderella's appearance at the ball the entire stage is flooded with a bright, almost blinding light and as though this were not enough, the entire auditorium of the Bolshoi Theatre is lit up. The chandeliers are burning brightly and Cinderella, held aloft, raises her arms. In this scene the ballet-master has penetrated into the main characteristic of Lepeshinskaya's talent. She is able to impersonate joy as nobody else in the ballet.

Galina Ulanova has created an entirely different image. She is a shy Cinderella whose dreams are secret. The fairy rewards her not only for her kindness but for her modesty as well. Ulanova's Cinderella accepts the fairy's gifts with a trembling hand that reminds one of the way little Cosette in Victor Hugo's novel received the shiny doll presented her by Jean Valjean. Ulanova is shaken when she sees the Milky Way, that weird,

fairy-like sky, for the first time. She is carried away by deep moving sentiment that is transmitted to the audience.

In creating this scene the ballet-master has revealed the main theme of Ulanova's creative art—her distinctive poetic emotion.

When Ulanova appears at the ball and the light is focussed on her and throughout the theatre, she is confused, excited and full of wonder, she continues her rapturous amazement at the new life which opens before her.

Ulanova the princess is a recluse. She keeps aloof from the dancing couples and, seated among the guests, she rejects the prince's addresses and bows her head when he speaks to her. These details are important for the treatment of Ulanova's part. Her Cinderella is bashful. She impresses the prince not so much with her beauty as with her unusualness. Ulanova's Cinderella might seem sentimental but for the purity of her plastic lines and their wonderful harmony.

Ulanova's tender Cinderella and Lepeshinskaya's passionate Cinderella differ from each other and yet they speak of one and the same thing. Ulanova is the poetry of Cinderella, while Lepeshinskaya is her joy.

Ulanova's sad Cinderella will find happiness. Lepeshinskaya's Cinderella, created for joy, has found it. Both performances speak of the inevitable triumph of good.

YURI GOLOVASHENKO

## SOFRONITSKY PLAYS SCRIBIN

Listening to [the] pianist Sofronitsky when he played Scriabin, I was often reminded of Turgenev's moving lines in *Singers*, in which he expressed with such delicacy of feeling his impressions of some nameless singer from amongst the people and of his inspired singing: "I have seldom, I must confess, heard a voice like it; it was slightly hoarse and not perfectly true, there was even something morbid about it at first; but it had genuine depth of passion, and youth, and sweetness and a sort of fascinating, careless, pathetic melancholy. A spirit of truth and fire, a Russian spirit was sounding and breathing in that voice, and it seemed to go straight to your heart, to go straight to all that was Russian in it."

There is something in Sofronitsky's art which is very close to this manner of interpretation, to its sweetness of grief and ardent passion.

It must not be thought that Russian song never contains anything other than an impetuous folk dance theme or one of tenderly-melancholy contemplation. It is sometimes tragic, and you can hear in it the sorrows of the people, the challenge to fate, the joy of love, the sufferings of the forlorn.

In the subtle nature of Sofronitsky's gift there is much that has close kinship with the poetic soul of Russian song, its joys and sorrows, its yearning for a better life, its warmheartedness and sincerity. His creative work is infused with a dream of a brighter,

better future, of sufferings conquered, or happiness won through hard and tormenting struggle. In this lies the romanticism of the musician. The romanticists of the past yearned for the ideal, as for something aloof and unattainable; the romantic trend in our art has as its basis faith in the power of man and his dream, a dream which is always of the attainable, though perhaps distant reality.

"I remember," Turgenev continues in his reminiscences of Yakov's songs, "I once saw at sunset on a flat sandy shore, when the tide was low and the sea's roar came weighty and menacing from the distance, a great white sea-gull; it sat motionless, its silky bosom facing the crimson glow of the setting sun, and only now and then opening wide its great wings to greet the familiar sea, to greet the sinking lurid sun." How close this memorable passage is to Sofronitsky's poetic inspiration! Is it not natural then to suppose that the source of his inspiration is very close to those from which Turgenev's singer drew his powers?

In many respects Sofronitsky's deeper psychology resembles the creative principles of Chekhov as a dramatist, and also those applied in the producer's art of the Moscow Art Theatre: there is the same revealing of ideas, not on the surface of the text, but in the depths of its undercurrents, the same truthfulness and sincerity of emotional experience, directness of creative work at each performance, the same understanding





*V. Sofronitsky. Portrait by P. Konchalovsky*

of the force of what had been left unsaid, of the charm of the suggestion, the same delicacy in conveying the psychological nuances.

It is the poetry of the finest of human emotions that moves Sofronitsky in music; the principal thing in the "poem" manner of execution is man's striving towards pure, just, vivid life; the most confused feelings acquire harmony in this striving towards the beautiful. The psychological nuance in Sofronitsky's performance never becomes an object of admiration, it has meaning only as an organic part of the whole. This defines the clarity and finish of the free and curious freakish forms.

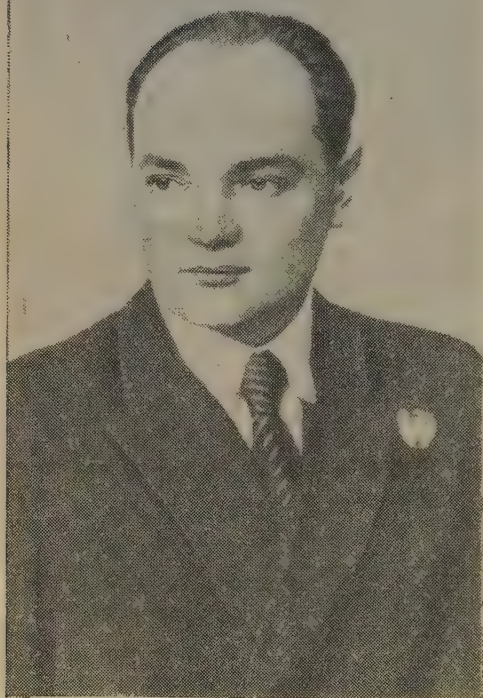
Sofronitsky's poetic realism is disclosed with particular vividness in his interpretation of Scriabin. There is always a great deal of controversy about Scriabin. The stumbling-block is his philosophic absorption. Some critics, in pointing out with justice his errors, display a tendency to identify the composer's philosophical outlook with his creative work; others suggest waiving his philosophy and enjoying his music. Sofronitsky finds his own path in the solution to these problems and it leads him to an understanding of the basic truth of Scriabin's work—belief in the power of art and the grandeur of the tasks confronting it. The great composer might not be a great philosopher, but he is dear to our hearts and we share his noble and ever vital striving towards truth.

Our esthetic enjoyment of Scriabin's music, as interpreted by Sofronitsky, is not associated with a mystical "tremor" at contact with the "unperceived" but with admiration of the delicacy and depth of knowledge.

Sofronitsky's execution is exalted in its sincerity. This is the passionate sincerity of a confession of the innermost thoughts as a moment of spiritual intimacy, a revelation of the soul, full of faith in the understanding and sympathy of the listener. This listener is sometimes carried away by the emotion of the heart of the artist when it is opened to him and is absorbed by the overmastering rhythm of musical images in which he begins to feel the pulsation of hidden creative principles in nature itself. At Sofronitsky's concerts the musician and his audience share the same thought, full of wonderful discoveries, sudden illumination when the humdrum seems extraordinary, the curious—comprehensible, the fortuitous—natural. With a sure hand the artist leads his audience to heights from which they have the widest view, where the air is pure and transparent and the horizon may be taken in at a glance. Here you feel the spaces of the sky, not overhead at an inaccessible height, but around you, in the low-sailing clouds and the familiar caress of the wind. What seemed a world of abstractions beyond human reach has proved a concrete, living reality, easily perceived by all our feelings.

*A. KRAMSKOY*

## NIKOLAI KHMELEV



With the death of Nikolai Khmelev, the art director and outstanding actor of the Moscow Art Theatre, the Soviet Union has suffered a heavy loss. Khmelev died on the stage, in the costume and make-up of Tsar Ivan Grozny, during a rehearsal of Alexei Tolstoy's play *The Difficult Years*....

An obituary signed by prominent people of the Soviet art world said: "Khmelev's talent was our national pride. He aroused the sympathies of all by his profound and delicate understanding of the Russian character."

Nikolai Khmelev was born in 1901 in the town of Sormovo, near Gorky. His father was a worker in the local factory. In 1916 the family moved to Moscow and this period marks the beginning of the youthful Khmelev's passion for the theatre, literature and art. On graduating high school in 1919, Khmelev entered the faculty of history and philology at the Moscow University and at the same time passed an entrance examination to the school of the Art Theatre. In 1924, the young actor made his first appearance on the stage of this famous Russian theatre. "His first performances," states the obituary, showed what a brilliant and daring talent had been added to the theatre's cast. His first roles astonished everybody by the wide range of his art and the exceptional gift of impersonation..." During the twenty

years of his stage career Khmelev created many vivid characters: the officer Alexei Turbin in Mikhail Bulgakov's play *Days of the Turbins*; the decrepit nobleman in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Uncle's Dream*; the profound and subtle interpretation of the character of the weak-willed Tsar Feodor in Alexei K. Tolstoy's *Tsar Feodor Ioanovich*; the clever, tactful Communist Peklevanov in Vsevolod Ivanov's *Armoured Train No. 1469*; the repulsive yet pitiful figure of Karenin in *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy; the warm-hearted, tender Tusenbach in Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*; the old Russian intellectual, Zabelin, in Nikolai Pogodin's *Kremlin Chimes*... All these proved definite stages, definite landmarks in Nikolai Khmelev's successful stage career. Death overtook him at a time when he had perfected the role of Tsar Ivan Grozny. The actors who saw the rehearsals unanimously declare that this role was a new triumph for this master of the stage.

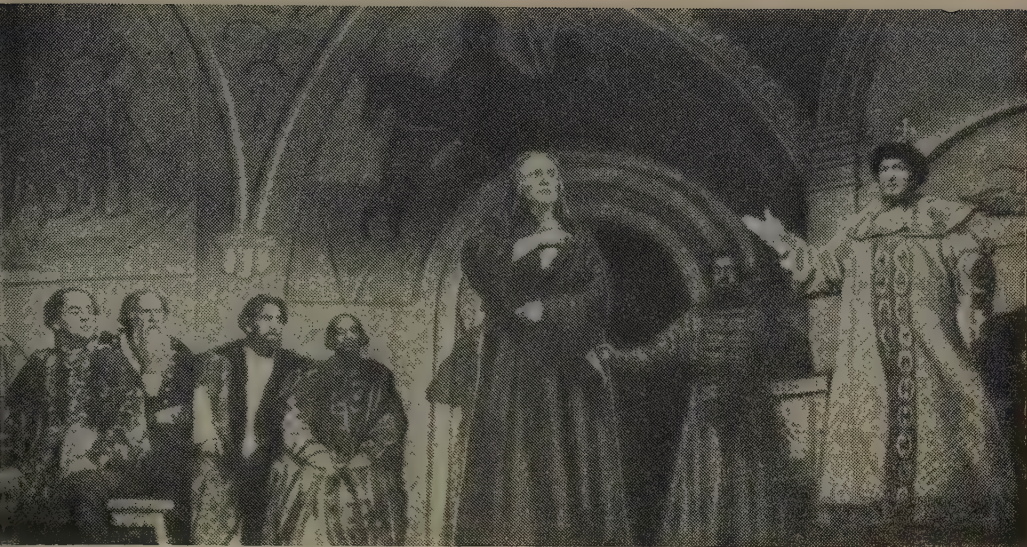
After the death of V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko, the second of the two founders of the Art Theatre, Khmelev became the art director of this theatre. "He entered the theatre as a timid youth at the dawn of his stage career," writes the critic Pavel Markov in the newspaper *Pravda*, "and ended his short but richly creative life as a popular and famous actor, and art director of the country's finest theatre. He always urged his colleagues to search for new stage images, and to give a true, fresh interpretation of life. He was possessed by a deep and ardent love for genuine art and fought against all distortions in the theatre."

In Khmelev was combined a talented actor and a producer of great ability. In the Art Theatre he staged Ostrovsky's *Last Sacrifice*. In the young Moscow Yermolova Theatre of which he was the founder, he produced several plays, including Gorky's *Children of the Sun*, and Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. Khmelev devoted much time to the training of young actors.

His sudden death not only came as a blow to his friends and fellow-actors, but was a shock to many thousands of theatre-goers. "The Soviet people have lost a beloved actor who expressed their most cherished hopes," wrote the newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda*.

...Moscow's entire theatre world followed Khmelev's body on its last journey. The coffin, which stood in the auditorium of the Art Theatre, was almost hidden under a mass of flowers and wreaths. A moving speech was made by the actress Alla Tarasova: "Khmelev was our young leader," she said. "He was endowed with the splendid and pure soul of an actor. His death comes as a heavy blow to the Soviet Theatre and to us all." The general feeling was eloquently expressed in an obituary article by the actor Vassili Kachalov, a friend of Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-





Scene from *THE GREAT TSAR*, a play presented by the Vakhtangov Theatre

Danchenko. "I feel Nikolai Khmelev's untimely death as a great loss to the Art Theatre and as a heavy personal loss. I have been so accustomed to admiring his wonderful talent, his ever increasing captivating histrionic mastery!.. It is indescribably sad to know that he is no longer with us."

The Soviet Government has issued a decision to perpetuate the memory of Khmelev. A Moscow street and School No. 77 in Sornovo, his home town, have been named after him. Six Khmelev stipends have been inaugurated for pupils of the studio-school of the Moscow Art Theatre and for students of the State Institute of Theatrical Art. Considerable material aid has been granted to the family of the late actor; his young son will receive a monthly pension until he comes of age.

## THEATRE

### A NEW PLAY ON IVAN GROZNY

In recent years the image of the Russian Tsar Ivan Grozny, one of Russia's greatest statesmen, has held the attention of Soviet theatres and playwrights. The Maly Theatre production of Alexei Tolstoy's *Ivan Grozny* was followed by Vladimir Solovyev's *The Great Tsar* in the Vakhtangov Theatre. The play reflects the last years of the reign of Ivan Grozny, when Russia had to bear the burden of cruel wars and internal conflicts. The sagacity and iron will of the Tsar brought Russia victoriously out of these trials.

The role of the Tsar is played by I. Tolchanov. One hundred years ago, the Russian critic Vissarion Belinsky wrote that at all periods of his life Ivan Grozny showed "iron force of character and the strength of great wisdom." This feature is vividly portrayed by Tolchanov, whose impersonation of Ivan is replete with philosophic wisdom.

In designing the stage settings for the play, the artist, V. Favorsky, has resorted to the

style of Russian church painting and architecture. Very successful is the stage curtain picturing the ancient Kremlin surrounded by the coats-of-arms of the old Russian cities. The music was composed by N. Sizov. The scenes in which both artist and composer have succeeded in harmonizing their work with the conception of the producer, Boris Zakhava, are full of great, emotional power. The scene of Ivan's first appearance in a tent on the sea-shore is particularly successful. To the sound of harps and violins in the orchestra, the folds of the tent sway in a light breeze. Gradually raised, they reveal the blue expanse of the sea, and the brilliant azure of the sky. Alone stands the figure of the Tsar. He speaks of his daring plans, conceived for the good of his country.

## IN MOSCOW THEATRES

The Affiliated Maly Theatre presents a comedy by Natan Rybak and Igor Savchenko, entitled *The Plane Is Twenty-Four Hours Late*. The action takes place in the spring of 1945. An aeroplane, flying the Moscow-Alaska route, has made a forced landing in the taiga. Thus, a number of unexpected guests arrive at a forester's hut: an engineer, a professor, a major, an actress, an actor and a factory employee. In this hut standing on the bank of a Siberian river, the passengers of the plane make the acquaintance of the old taiga dweller, Ivan Panteleyevich, his wife and grand-daughter. The events, which unfold in the course of twenty-four hours, reveal the characters of these people brought together by a whim of fate.

The Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theatre has staged Millecœur's comic opera *The Beggar Student*. Utilizing a new text written by Nikola Erdman and Mikhail Ulitsky, in which the theme of the opera remains unchanged, the theatre



has created a witty entertainment full of humorous episodes. The opera score has been supplemented by fragments from other works of Millecoeur. The performance has been splendidly staged by Pavel Markov and Pavel Zlatogorsky.

The Moscow Theatre of Satire which primarily stages plays by modern playwrights, on topical questions of the day, has turned to Russian classical comedy. *The Marriage of Belugin*, by N. Y. Solovyev (1845-1898) in collaboration with A. N. Ostrovsky, provides the actors with much excellent material. Critics were unanimous in their praise of the actor I. A. Lyubeznov in the star role of Andrei Belugin, a simple, warm-hearted Russian. Stage settings by Ivan Fedotov are most striking. This play marked the successful debut of the young producer, A. A. Goncharov.

A new nautical musical comedy, *The Sailor's Knot* by V. Vinnikov and V. Kracht, has been produced by the Moscow Theatre of Musical Comedy. The score is by Evgeni Zharkovsky, who served in the navy throughout the war. The action takes place in a town on the southern coast of the U.S.S.R. and it deals with the love and friendship of Soviet sailors. The cast is composed almost entirely of young actors who have recently joined the theatre.

#### THE CLUB FOR THEATRE WORKERS

At the end of the last century the Russian Theatrical Society was formed on the initiative of leading Russian actors. In its time it has played an important role in uniting

the workers of the Russian theatre. During the years of Soviet power the activities of the society have acquired new scope.

Many and varied are the activities that take place in the club for theatre workers, The House of the Actor. Here every evening interesting concerts are given, new films shown, discussions and short performances arranged. The House of the Actor reflects the events of the theatrical and social life of the country. Among its habitués are stage veterans and young actors, war-hardened generals, sailors, as well as men of science... Much research is conducted here on various questions of histrionic art. There is a collection of much valuable bibliographical material and a card index of all possible branches of theatrical activity. Producer, actor or artist can obtain any necessary information and consultation. The doors of the House of the Actor are hospitably open to all Soviet theatre workers.

Much interest was aroused by a recent conference organized by the Theatrical Society dealing with the work of Moscow artists in productions of 1941-1945. An exhibition of 115 models and sketches of stage settings of plays produced by Moscow theatres during the war was arranged in the foyer of the House of the Actor. These included works by the artists Nikolai Akimov, Alexander Deineka, Pavel Sokolov-Skalya, Peter Williams, Vadim Ryndin, Alexander Tyshler.

Opening the conference, the director, Yuri Zavadsky, outlined the role of the artist in the production of a play and the importance of his cooperation with the producer. After a report by the art expert, Abram Efros, many producers, artists and critics spoke. The decorations designed by the artist N. Shifrin were highly praised in the plays: *People of Stalingrad* and *The Field-Marshal* produced in the Central Theatre of the Red Army. The grim, heroic landscape of besieged Leningrad as conceived by the artist V. Dmitriev for the opera *Nadezhda Svellova* presented by the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theatre was also commended. As an example of collaboration in the work of the producer and the artist, mention was made of the Moscow Art Theatre's production *Deep Boring* produced by Mikhail Kedrov, artist, Vladimir Tatlin.

The door of one of the rooms in The House of the Actor bears a tablet with the inscription: "The Theatre of Ostrovsky and Russian Classics." This room houses a scientific department of the Theatrical Society headed by Professor Vladimir Filippov. Everything in this room is connected with Ostrovsky, the 19th century playwright. On the walls are pictures portraying episodes from his life, as well as sketches of his estate at Shelykovo where he lived for many years: the writer's study, the old country house, the shady avenue in which he used to walk, the mill on the river, by which he loved to sit for hours at a time... The bookshelves contain everything that can possibly help the producer, actor and artist in their work on Ostrovsky's plays: a collection of old Russian magazines—*Sovremennik*, *Vestnik Evropy*, *Moskovityanin*—in which Ostrovsky's works



Scene from *THE BEGGAR STUDENT*, an operetta presented by the Stanislavsky Theatre



ere first printed; critical articles, notes, reviews of each play, from its première until the present day; negatives of photographs of all Ostrovsky's plays produced in Russia, and an exhaustive dictionary-handbook on these plays, containing words, expressions and names used by the playwright and now obsolete.

A Department of the Musical Theatre has existed in the All-Russian Theatrical Society for the past five years. Outstanding Soviet producers, composers, singers, such as Antonina Nezhdanova, Reinhold Gliere, Boris Asafyev, Nikolai Golovanov, Alexander Goldenweiser and others, are engaged in the work of the department which deals with art problems of the Russian opera and ballet and studies the work of Soviet musical theatres. A number of scientific sessions, dedicated to Russian composers, have been arranged.

Compilation of a volume of works on modern operas is approaching completion: it will contain articles on Sergei Prokofyev's *War and Peace*, Maryan Koval's *People of Sevastopol*, Alexandrov's *Bela*, Dmitri Kabalevski's *In the Flames*.

## RADIO EXCURSIONS THROUGH THEATRES

Radio listeners living in all parts of the vast Soviet Union may make regular excursions through Moscow theatres and concert halls. Let us go with them on one such radio excursion.

...As the hands of the clock approach 30 p.m. we hear the voice of the announcer saying that the radio excursion is about to begin.

We first visit the Bolshoi Theatre to hear the opera *Carmen*. "The lights are lowered in the splendid auditorium of the Bolshoi Theatre," says the announcer. "Soon the curtain depicting a bull-fight, especially painted for this opera, will rise to reveal the square outside the cigarette factory in Seville..."

The stirring notes of the overture reach us through the ether, Micaela sings her aria and we hear the burst of applause following the famous Habanera...

Next, the microphone takes us to the concert hall in the House of Trade Unions where a symphony concert is being given by the orchestra of the All-Union Radio Committee, conducted by Constantine Ivanov. They are playing Alexander Glazunov's fifth Symphony.

Then the announcer invites us to follow him to the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theatre to listen to a scene from the opera *Traviata*.

...In the Moscow Art Theatre the curtain has risen on the fourth scene of the play *Sar Feodor Ioannovich* with which the young theatre began its career forty-seven years ago.

The applause from the Art Theatre is still ringing in our ears, when the microphone is next switched over to the Large Hall of the Conservatory where the violinist, Galina Karinova, is playing a Beethoven Sonata...

And so the excursion continues. From the Affiliated Bolshoi Theatre a scene from Alexander Dargomyzhsky's opera *The Mermaid* is relayed.

In conclusion listeners hear Vassili Kachalov, the eminent Soviet elocutionist and actor, reciting the verses of Alexander Blok.

Then comes the voice of the announcer again:

"Our radio excursion is over. Naturally, in a few hours we could not show you all the various aspects of Moscow's theatrical and musical life. But the performances and concerts you have heard tonight indicate the many-sidedness of the art life of the Soviet capital."

## MUSIC

### CHAMBER-MUSIC CONCERTS

Moscow concert-goers are having a full season. Various concerts are given every evening in the Large and Small Halls of the Conservatory, in the Hall of Columns of the House of Trade Unions, in the concert hall of the Central House of the Red Army, the House of the Actor, the Central House of Art Workers, the House of Scientists and in the numerous clubs of the capital.

Of all the concerts of chamber music given during the first weeks of the season, the "lieder-abende" of three singers, is of special interest.

VERA DAVYDOVA. Vera Davydova, the accomplished opera singer, has given a cycle of seven concerts of *Russian Songs*, the program of which included some 200 numbers. The last concert was devoted entirely to lyrical compositions by Sergei Rachmaninov. It is difficult to say which moods are best conveyed by Davydova: the mournful tragedy of the *Fragment from Musset*, the pathos of the love-song *Oh, Leave Me Not, I Implore Thee*, or the pensive sorrow of *My Native Fields*. For each of these compositions the singer has found the appropriate colouring and correct intonations. Davydova's stage experience is undoubtedly of great help to her and even in the shortest song she succeeds in creating perfect harmony, the words and music in complete accord.

MARIA MAKSAKOVA. At concerts given by Maksakova we recall the words of Mikhail Glinka who once said that "the resources of expressiveness in music, particularly in vocal art, are inexhaustible." She has an exceptional range of expression. Included in Maksakova's concert program was the difficult Schumann's cycle *Frauen Lieb und Leben* (words by A. Chamisso). The eight songs, linked together into a vocal suite, as it were, contain an entire world of intricate feelings, hopes and aspirations. Maksakova sang Schumann's compositions with restrained emotion and sober simplicity.

The second half of the concert was devoted to Chaikovsky's ballads. The singer chose a number of his vocal lyrics replete with an inner dramatic force: *Again Forsaken*; *Could You But Know*, and *He Loved Me Well*. Maksakova's well-trained rich and colourful

voice is a splendid instrument for conveying Chaikovsky's music.

ELENA KRUGLIKOVA. This singer chose Rachmaninov and Chaikovsky for her concert program. Her performance of Chaikovsky's songs *Korolki* and *The Fearful Moment* expressed noble, poetic simplicity. The gradual rise of sentiments from those of restrained grief to passionate emotion were conveyed in the songs *Not Words*, *Oh, My Friend*, and *Why*. Equally successful were the gentle appeal of the *Serenade* and the ardent passion of *Zemphira's Song*. In Elena Kruglikova's interpretation of Rachmaninov, her love for Russian nature is felt—the sweet fragrance of the lilac (*The Lilacs*) and the joyous breath of spring (*Spring Waters*).

#### RECENT COMPOSITIONS PERFORMED

Concerts of new works by Soviet composers are a frequent occurrence in Moscow. A recent symphony concert, conducted by the Georgian maestro Odissei Dmitriadi, scored a great success in the Large Hall of the Conservatory. The program included the first symphony by A. Balanchivadze, and a musical poem for voice and orchestra, by S. Baramishvili to the text of Gorky's *The Song of the Stormy Petrel*. Svyatoslav Knushevitsky gave a brilliant rendering of Nikolai Myaskovsky's violoncello concerto, composed last year. The audience also heard two arias from Dmitri Kabalevsky's opera *The Master of Clamcy*, based on the novel *Colas Brugnion* by Romain Rolland.

A new item in the concert program was *The Victory Overture* by one of the oldest Soviet composers, Reinhold Gliere. The overture, based on an extensive Russian theme of epic character and two national themes—English and American—was played by the orchestra with great verve.

#### SONG RECORDS.

In search of new material, the Recording Factory in Moscow from time to time organizes special expeditions to the Ukraine, Armenia and Georgia. In recent times over 50 recordings of original songs have been made in Armenia alone. The Kazakh singer, Kulyash Baiseitova has supplied records of the lyrical and humorous songs of her native steppes. New songs of Belorussia, Kirghizia, Turkmenistan and a rich and varied collection of Russian folk songs have been recorded. A new song by Vladimir Zakharov and an old Russian folksong sung by the State Pyatnitsky Chorus, have also been recorded.

The collection of the Recording Factory grows from year to year, reflecting the wealth and variety of the musical art of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

#### BEETHOVEN QUARTET IN ITS THIRD DECADE

For over twenty years, four Moscow musicians—Dmitri Tsyganov, Vassili Shirinsky, Vadim Borisovsky and Sergei Shirinsky—have

been working in close cooperation. While still students of the Moscow Conservatory they formed a string quartet later endowed with the title *Beethoven Quartet*, which is widely known throughout the country.

This quartet is now rehearsing the unpublished works of Russian composers. Among these is a Glinka quartet written in 1829, the score of which was recently discovered in the Leningrad Public Library. The new program also includes one of Sergei Taneyev's early quartets which, before the war, was preserved in the Chaikovsky museum-house in Klin. This work was approved by Chaikovsky who left numerous notes on the margin of the score. The Quartet has also rehearsed several unpublished Rachmaninov works—a trio, romance and scherzo from the youth quartet. The romance and scherzo are among the first attempts of the sixteen-year-old Rachmaninov at composing chamber music. The trio was written in 1892 when the composer had not yet reached the age of twenty. These "pen trials" of the youthful Rachmaninov bear the clear imprint of his future powerful talent.

#### FYODOR CHALIAPIN'S HOUSE

In a certain Moscow street, named after Chaikovsky, stands a tiny old house. Once, in the drawing-room of this house, Sergei Rachmaninov played his compositions, the actress Maria Yermolova read her roles, Anton Chekhov, Maxim Gorky, Leonid Andreyev, Alexander Kuprin read their works... At that time, the house belonged to the famous Russian singer Fyodor Chaliapin. Now it is the home of his daughter, Irina Chaliapina, an actress in a Moscow dramatic theatre.

The walls of the rooms are covered with pictures by famous Russian artists, interesting photographs, and caricatures. One of the photographs shows Chaliapin in the shoemaker's shop where he worked as an apprentice. There is an interesting collection of photographs of the singer in all his roles on the Russian and European stage. Attention is attracted by an amusing portrait of Chaliapin, in the role of Don Quixote, drawn by the singer himself.

The singer's correspondence with Maxim Gorky, Anton Chekhov and the critic Vladimir Stassov carries the visitor back to the beginning of the 20th century. Amidst the jesting phrases of Gorky's friendly letters we find expressions of the great writer's profound idea about the Russian people's talent "which bears witness to the great strength and power of our homeland, to those living springs of pure blood which flow through the heart of the country..." In one of his letters, Gorky offers to write Chaliapin's biography, agreeing "to come whenever you like and work for three or four hours a day." Amongst the yellowed newspaper cuttings we find the humorous story *Gogol-Mogol* recorded by A. Kuprin from Chaliapin's words and containing the reminiscence of the singer's first appearance on the concert platform as a young man.



SOVIET WRITERS ELECTED TO THE SUPREME SOVIET  
OF THE U.S.S.R.



WANDA WASILEWSKA



YAKUB KOLAS



PAVEL TYCHINA



SHALVA DADIANI

RE-OPENING OF THE LENINGRAD  
HERMITAGE

The doors of the largest museum in the U.S.S.R.—the State Hermitage in Leningrad—have re-opened. Once again visitors may enter the vast halls with their numerous art treasures.

The Hermitage suffered badly during the war. Soon after the blockade was lifted from Leningrad, Tatyana Tess, the journalist, visited the Hermitage. This is what she then wrote:

"...The tall windows are boarded up. The frost is so intense that it seems as though it had been gathered from the whole city and confined here. On all sides lie boxes filled with sand, huge pliers, axes, crow-bars. Empty frames hang on the walls... During the blockade of the city, more than twenty shells struck the Hermitage building. Tons of broken glass crashed down into the halls, onto the beautiful old parquet floors. A day before the blockade was lifted, a German shell hit the armorial hall and the force of the explosion tore out the window-frames, which still hang by their hinges twisted and broken... Another shell hit the cornice just below the figure of Atlas supporting the roof. The stone youth still stands, with stubbornly bent head and bearing on his shoulders the entire burden of the split cornice."

At the outbreak of war, the most valuable treasures were removed from the Hermitage. Those that remained were packed and carried into safety to vaults and cellars. Members of the staff, young post-graduates, students, silver-haired scientists all remained with the museum. At each "alert" they went to their posts ready to defend the Hermitage. Scientists crawled over the roofs, when necessary boarding up holes.

The branch section of the Hermitage was severely damaged and all the collections which had remained in it had to be removed to the main building. They were carted in wheel-barrows and small carts or simply on the backs and shoulders of the museum staff. But they were all saved and placed in the vaults. Then, when this was done, the water-pipes burst from the frost and the vaults were flooded!.. Again these art treasures had to be removed. The pipes leaked and day by day the water soaked through the walls and little rivulets trickled under the locked doors. Water became an enemy to be feared, hated and fought against. The temperature in the halls dropped lower and lower, the destructive dampness threatened the collections. Life in the city, exhausted by the blockade, became more and more tense. Nevertheless, the Hermitage staff fought to save some of the most precious things in life—the beautiful treasures of art...

Now all that is a thing of the past. Visitors to the stately halls are met once more by the glisten of the chased gold vessels from the Scythian tombs, by the dull silver Sassanide dishes, by the thousand lights reflected by the pearls, emeralds and sapphires of the Iranian exhibits. The Hermitage contains

canvases by the world's greatest painters—Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Titian, Giorgione, Rembrandt, Rubens, Van Dyke, Velasquez, Murillo. Its halls display unique pieces of jewellery, famous collections of ancient Grecian vases and Roman portraits, a remarkable collection of oriental and western gold coins. It is difficult to enumerate all the treasures of the Hermitage, they are so many and varied.

## MISCELLANEOUS

THE RUSSIAN GEOGRAPHICAL  
SOCIETY'S CENTENARY

One hundred years ago, Russian geographers gathered in the Academy of Sciences in Petersburg and passed a decision to inaugurate the Russian Geographical Society. Thus, a centre of geographical science came into being in Russia.

Beginning with the twenties of the past century, geographical research had been concentrated in the geographical societies of various countries. At first, such a society was formed in France (1821). A little later the London Geographical Society was organized (1831), and finally, in 1845, the Russian society of geographers was inaugurated.

At that time, the territory of the Russian Empire had by no means been completely explored. The many "white spots" remaining on the map of the country intrigued scientific explorers. The Russian Geographical Society turned its attention to the Northern Urals, Eastern Siberia and the Far East. And the first scientific expeditions organized by the Society left for those territories.

Some time later, in the seventies of the past century, on the initiative of two eminent Russian geographers—Peter Semenov and Nikolai Przhevalsky—measures were taken to explore Central Asia, Kazakhstan, and the lands of Central Asia: Mongolia, Tibet and Northern China. These two tireless explorers contributed much valuable information to Russian geographical science—Semenov by his travels in the Tian-Shan (for which he received the name of Semenov-Tian-Shansky), and Przhevalsky by his expeditions to Central Asia.

In the seventies and eighties of the past century, world fame was gained by Nikolai N. Miklukha-Maklai for his travels to New Guinea, the interior of Indo-China and Malacca, where he studied the life and customs of the Papuans and other peoples, almost unknown at that time. After many years of research and exploration he succeeded in brilliantly proving the origin of all human races from one common stalk, completely refuting the erroneous theory of the origin of man from various ancestors, the theory which later served as the basis for the "racial" theory of fascism.

Numerous interesting expeditions were made by scientists of later generations: P. K. Kozlov, L. S. Berg (now president of the Society), Academicians V. L. Komarov, V. A. Obruchev, and others. Overcoming tremendous difficulties, crossing waterless deserts and wild mountain ranges these expeditions revealed the geographical secrets of the Asian continent—step by step.



The activities of the Geographical Society have developed on a particularly wide scale during the past quarter of a century. The society studies the results of the expeditions and research work conducted by the numerous institutes and scientific institutions of the U.S.S.R., considers the theoretical problems which arise in the course of practical research.

In 1933, the First Geographical Congress of the U.S.S.R. was held and played an important part in the further development of Soviet geographical science. The centenary of the society coincided with the organization of a special State Publishing House of Geographical Literature in the U.S.S.R. In 1946, a number of new editions of Russian geographical classics will be published, including the works of N. Przhevalsky, P. Semenov-Tian-Shansky, P. Kozlov, and also several new books on the travels of Livingstone, Stanley, and other famous explorers. Work on the compilation of a geographical dictionary of the U.S.S.R., in three volumes, has been begun.

### AMONGST ANCIENT DOCUMENTS

... The massive metal door closes softly on its hinges and the visitor finds himself in an atmosphere of complete quiet. A new and peculiar world opens up before him. Here, on high shelves and enclosed in cardboard cases, are thick leather-bound volumes, in which the documents of Russian history are preserved.

The State Central Archives of ancient documents contain 170,000 rare, ancient books and manuscripts and some five million archive files, many of which hold hundreds of documents. The archives reflect the history of Russia for 700 years: from the 13th to the beginning of the 20th century.

In the central part of the building, state documents of particular importance are kept. Special permission is required to work in this room. The oldest document there is dated 1265, and is an agreement between Prince Yaroslav of Tver, brother of Alexander Nevsky who defeated the Teuton knights, and the free city of Novgorod which in those days was called the "Master City of Great Novgorod." The writing on the parchment has not faded in the course of seven centuries. The archives of the Muscovy high princes Ivan Kalita and Dmitri Donskoi, who lived in the 14th century, have been equally well preserved. There are many documents relating to the epoch of Ivan Grozny. The attendant draws a long roll from a cardboard case: it is the decision of the Zemsky Sobor Assembly of 1556 to continue the war against the Livonian Order. The greater part of the huge roll of parchment is covered by the signatures of the members of the assembly.

The archive of Peter the Great consists of 29 books, bound in leather. Each of them contains 1,000 to 1,200 pages, some of the books weighing as much as half a pood. The edicts of Peter the Great amaze us by the variety of questions dealt with by the Tsar—from the most important state decisions to detailed instructions on the use of mineral waters. A small box contains Peter's personal belongings—his pen and 25 notebooks in which the Tsar made notes of things he wished to remember.

The documents preserved in the archives are various. Here are two letters, signed by Napoleon, written during the war of 1812. One was dispatched from Moscow and the other from Smolensk, but they never reached the addressees—the Empress Louise—being intercepted on the way by Russian Cossacks.

Many of the documents filed here have not yet been studied. Quite recently, a document was discovered by the staff, which stated that in 1613 a decree was issued by Tsar Mikhail Fyodorovich about the collection of skis for the troops from the population. It appears that already at the very beginning of the 17th century, Russian troops used skis on a large scale for their military operations.

The Russian historians Solovyev, Kluchevsky, Platonov made wide use of the material of these archives. Soviet historians—academicians, professors, young post-graduates—are constant visitors to this repository.

In 1945, the State Archives marked the 225th anniversary of their existence. The foundations were laid in 1720 when, by order of Tsar Peter the Great, an archive was formed in the Collegium of Foreign Affairs, which received all the documents of one of the most ancient institutions of the Muscovy State—the Posolsky Prikaz (Department of Foreign Affairs). From year to year the archives were complemented, both by materials from government institutions and the collections of private individuals. In the second half of the 19th century, Mazurin, a Moscow merchant and an enthusiastic collector, who in the course of long years had accumulated 8,000 rare books and 1,500 manuscripts, presented the whole of his collection to the archives.

At present, additions continue to be made to the fund of the archives.

### JOHN KEATS IN RUSSIA

Soviet literary circles recently marked the 150th anniversary of the birth of John Keats. A long article by Professor Mikhail Morozov was published in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* giving a detailed account of the short life of the poet, of his destiny which brought him recognition and fame only after his death.

The State Library of Foreign Languages in Moscow organized a Keats evening. After a report by Professor M. M. Morozov, the poet Samuel Marshak read several of his new translations of Keats' poems. Some of these translations have appeared in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, while the entire cycle is being published in the magazine *October*. S. Marshak's translations convey, precisely and poetically, the melody of Keats' original verse, the wealth of thought and beauty of images contained in them, and reveal in a new way to the Russian reader the poetical essence of the art of John Keats.

### THE DOSTOYEVSKY MUSEUM

After an interval of four years, the museum-apartment of Fyodor Dostoyevsky, the great Russian writer, has been re-opened in Moscow.

The Dostoyevsky museum-apartment contains a collection of some 6,000 articles and

books, manuscripts, personal belongings and photographs of the writer at various periods of his life.

## TURGENEV'S HOME NEAR OREL

Amid the ruins of buildings wrecked by the Hitlerites in the city of Orel stands an ancient, one-storied house that survived by accident. The pediment bears a bas-relief in the form of an open book and the inscription: *State Turgenev Museum*.

Many pages in Turgenev's biography are connected with this house and the estate Spasskoye-Lutovinovo, near Orel. The museum exhibits enable the visitor to trace the creative process of the novelist's best works: *Rudin*, *A Nest of Gentlefolk*, *Fathers and Sons*, *On the Eve*, *Smoke*, *Virgin Soil*, and others.

In 1847, the magazine *Sovremennik* printed the short story *Khor and Kalynich* which was the first of the famous *Annals of a Sportsman*. The story immediately made a name in literature for the young Turgenev. "The success of this story encouraged me to write others," said the author. In 1852, for an article on the death of Gogol, published in the *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, Turgenev was arrested and banished to his estate of Spasskoye-Lutovinovo where he spent many long months. During this period, he wrote a great deal, studied the life of the peasants, and became an enthusiastic hunter. "Hunting brings us closer to nature," he said. "Only the hunter sees nature at all hours of the day and night, in all her beauty."

Visitors to the museum linger long near one of the show-cases where, behind the glass, lie a grey felt hat, a glass flask, a powder-horn, a huntsman's bag, a double-barrelled gun—the hunter's accessories used by Turgenev.

Visitors also gaze with interest at the glass case containing a red gown and mortar-board—the gift of Oxford University. The museum contains some of the ancient furniture from the estate at Spasskoye-Lutovinovo. About this furniture, Turgenev wrote to Gustave Flaubert from Spasskoye in 1879: "The house is comfortless and cold, but the furniture is good. There is an excellent writing table, and an arm-chair with a double cane seat." This same mahogany furniture is on display in one of the

museum rooms. There are also numerous articles used by the writer—his desk at which his best works were written, his library of Russian and French books.

In the last hall we come upon a portrait of Turgenev on his death-bed. And here we read the words of the writer:

"I lay down my pen ... A last advice to young authors and one last request: ... Guard our language, it is a treasure, a fortune handed down to us by our predecessors, amongst whom was Pushkin ..."

## THE ART OF AN ANCIENT PEOPLE

The Uighur are one of the most ancient peoples of Central Asia. In the past, enslavers deprived their people not only of their land but also of their very name, and they became known as Taranchi or husbandmen. The Uighur people were doomed to slow extinction. But neither the hordes of Genghis-Khan nor the Manchurian conquerors, neither the Central Asian satraps nor natural calamities could break the spirit of these people ... The Uighurs have preserved their ancient customs, songs and music.

Recently, a 10-day festival of Uighur art was held in Alma-Ata, capital of Kazakhstan. The young Uighur theatre of music and drama is equally successful in staging the old theatrical games and modern plays of the European stage. The entire personnel of the theatre, producers and actors, has been formed in the past fifteen years from the Uighur youth. The theatre presents plays by world-famous playwrights, the comedies of Moliere and Gogol side-by-side with works of Uighur playwrights. Talented impersonations of modern and ancient roles are given by Raushan Ilyakhunova, Makhpir Bakiev, and others.

Uighur folklore is extremely interesting. The songs about the hero Sadyr Paluan and the young girl Nuzugum reflect the heroic and pensive soul of the Uighur people. Russian travellers have thrown much light on the history of Uighur national culture, and we find useful information in the works of the Russian explorer, Nikolai Przhevalski and the Kazakh scientist Chokan Valikhanov.

*The Turgenev Museum at Spasskoye-Lutovinovo*





The Moscow literary world has its own traditions. One of them are the *Wednesdays* of the State Museum of Literature. Once a week, writers, critics, and students of literature gather here. One of the recent *Wednesdays* was devoted to the literary legacy of the poet Yedor Tyutchev who lived in 1803-1873. A paper was read by the writer Kirill Pigarev, descendant of the famous poet and author of a book on Suvorov published in 1943.

Tyutchev's epistolary legacy includes 150 letters, of which only a tenth part has been published. The poet's correspondence contains valuable information on the history and public life of the period 1830-1873, and comments on most of the noteworthy events of the time. The characteristics of Tyutchev as a lyric poet and publicist are vividly shown up in these interesting documents which afford plenty of material for a study of the poet's biography and creative art.

### CONTEST FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS

The third contest in the two-year competition for the best children's book has just ended, and at its final sitting the jury awarded nine prizes, including seven for the best prose books and two for poetical works.

The number of works submitted increased with each contest, being 98 manuscripts in the first, 119 in the second and 135 in the third.

The first two prizes of 35,000 roubles each were awarded to V. V. Veresayev (posthumously) for the biographical novel *A. Pushkin* for schoolchildren, and to M. Prishvin for the fairy tale *The Storehouse of the Sun*.

The third prizes (10,000 roubles each) were awarded to five authors: T. S. Gritz—*Sharpshooters*, a book about snipers, A. Derman—*The Life of V. Korolenko*, a biography; S. Lipkin—*The Adventures of the Hero Shoushur* (a legend of the Mongolian people); N. Pavlov (Leningrad)—*The Natural History Room*, stories about plants; and A. Perventsev—*The Flaming Earth*, a story about the naval landing in the Crimea during the Great Patriotic War.

No first or second prizes were awarded for poetical works. The third prizes were won by I. Inber for her poem for pre-school children—*Home! Home!* and to P. Komarov for an anthology *Inhabitants of the Taiga*.

In addition to the prize-winners, the jury recommended that nine books should be published and remuneration paid to the authors. These included: *The Banner on the Hill*, a story by G. Berezko; *In the Caspian Jungles*, a popular science book by G. Borovikov; *A Son of the People*, a biography of Sergo Orjonikidze by V. Sablin; and a reader for senior schoolchildren *Stories about Science and Scientists*, compiled by Academician Fersman, Zhirev and Professor Yakovlev.

As a result of the third contest 32 books were chosen for the press.

The numerous libraries and reading-rooms of the Soviet Union (before the war there were over 70,000) include one quite different from all the others both in its contents and readers. This is the State Library of Foreign Languages in Moscow.

The book fund of this library consists of over 400,000 volumes in 30 languages; here you will find fiction, history and books on literature and art. The library has 20,000 readers—men and women, knowing foreign languages, scientific workers, students, scholars of art and literature, pedagogues, translators, writers and journalists.

There is a lending department, but the functions of the library are not limited to merely handing out books. On the contrary, they are many and varied. The staff do their utmost to help readers with their work. In the course of 1944 alone, 150,000 persons visited the reading-room. There are circles for the study of foreign languages, seminars for foreign language teachers, lectures and reports. It may be said that the library trains its permanent readers.

The bibliographical department compiles catalogues, indices and hand-books, chiefly on fiction. For instance, a large reference work on English and American literature has just been completed. The English section of this reference work begins with Chaucer and ends with H. G. Wells, while the American section begins with Washington Irving and ends with Upton Sinclair and Theodore Dreiser.

The second part of this work was completed in 1945 and includes modern English and American authors. It is prefaced by an article entitled: *War and Fiction*. The reference work includes a short biography of each writer, characteristics of his best works, annotations and a list of critical reviews and existing Russian translations.

A similar reference work on French literature has also been compiled.

The bibliographical department is also publishing a number of catalogues: a catalogue of the best works of world literature, of anti-fascist literature and of Slav belle-lettres. A new reference work will soon be published entitled: *The Struggle of the Peoples for National Liberation Against German Aggression as Reflected in Western Literature*.

In connection with various jubilee dates of different authors, special small pamphlets containing biographical and bibliographical data are published.

The library has a lecture-room where reports, lectures, literary evenings, and even theatrical performances in foreign languages are given.

Book exhibitions are regularly arranged in the reading-rooms to coincide with important dates in the history of world literature and art.

The work of the library was not interrupted even during the most difficult days of the war. For instance, in the first year of the war a large exhibition was arranged of the best works of leading American writers, beginning with Benjamin Franklin. During the difficult Moscow days of 1942, an exhibition of Jack London's books was organized. Mr. Davis, the American Ambassador to



the U.S.S.R., who visited this exhibition, mentioned in the press the vivid interest taken by Soviet readers in American literature even in those grim war days.

The exhibition *Representatives of Great English Literature* was also opened during the war.

In 1945, Ivan Kashkin, a well-known man of letters and translator, made a highly interesting report on modern American poetry. Together with the writer Zenkevich he has compiled an anthology *American Poets of the 20th Century*. An exhibition of modern American poetry was simultaneously organized.

Great interest was also aroused by Professor Zvavich's report in English on modern English literature and journalism.

Crowded auditoriums gathered for the series: *Readings of Works by Western Authors in the Original Language*. Such evenings were devoted to Mark Twain, Jack London, Bernard Shaw, John Galsworthy, American short stories and English and American humour.

During the past year, many interesting evenings were devoted to the work of poets-translators. Soviet poets read many of their translations from foreign poets. Boris Pasternak read his translations of Shakespeare; Marshak, English ballads and songs and also poems of Burns, Keats, Kipling, Tennyson; Levik, translations of Browning and Shelley; Chukovsky, Walt Whitman and Shakespeare's comedy *Love's Labours Lost*.

In the series *The World's Largest Cities and Their Reflection in Literature* an interesting lecture was given by A. Troyanovsky, former Soviet Ambassador to the U. S. A. He dealt with New York as featured in American literature. Similar papers were read on London by Professor Nelson and on Paris by the writer Ilya Ehrenburg. Owing to the great interest aroused by these subjects, the exhibition *London* was later transferred to a large Moscow automobile plant, where it proved a great success.

In connection with the 75th anniversary of the death of Dickens, a large exhibition was organized in the library. Here were exhibits on the life of Dickens, his works, litera-

ture about him, editions of his books published in other countries, in particular those published in the U.S.S.R.

A lecture on Dickens was held in the library. The writer Evgeni Lann read a paper entitled *Dickens' Creative Art* and two chapters from his new biographical novel on Dickens. This was followed by the reading of excerpts from the *Pickwick Papers*. The Dickens evening, which was a great success, was later repeated in the Central Park of Culture and Rest where scenes from *The Pickwick Club* were performed by actors of the Moscow Art Theatre.

At present, two exhibitions are open in the Library—one dedicated to Swift, and the other to Keats. The display *Libraries of the USA* which recently came to a close, illustrated the work of American libraries both in New York and the provinces.

We must add here, that the work of the State Library of Foreign Languages is by no means confined to its own building. Branches function at large Moscow enterprises, where language courses are organized for the workers. During the summer months, branches also are open in the parks of the capital, where literary evenings and exhibitions are organized. During the war the library kept the hospitals supplied with books.

Foreign writers and public figures visiting the U.S.S.R. frequently come to the library. A recent visitor was Lillian Hellman, the American authoress whose plays are running on the Soviet stage. She told the library personnel about many new developments in the literary life of the United States of America.

In recent years, the library has received gifts of many valuable books from foreign friends and organizations. The director of the Library of Congress in Washington and well-known poet, McLeish, has sent the library a collection of books by modern American poets numbering 1,500 volumes. Several parcels of new editions of British classics and also books on English history, literature and language have arrived from England. The citizens of Leeds recently forwarded a gift of 150 historical volumes. The American Press Bureau presented the library with a collection of Robinson's books and literature about him.



## Read "SOVIET LITERATURE"

The only Monthly devoted exclusively  
to Literature and Art in the U.S.S.R.

PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH

### **SOVIET LITERATURE**

presents the best works of Soviet writers.

### **SOVIET LITERATURE**

features articles by prominent writers, critics and journalists.

### **SOVIET LITERATURE**

gives reviews on books published in the Soviet Union.

### **SOVIET LITERATURE**

publishes reviews on the latest works of the Soviet stage, music, cinema and art.

TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH LITERATURE  
AND ART IN THE SOVIET UNION

SUBSCRIBE TO "SOVIET LITERATURE"

---

Readers may subscribe to or purchase "SOVIET LITERATURE" at  
the addresses listed on the next page.

---



# SOVIET LITERATURE

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES 1946:

1 year	6 months	3 months
\$ 2.50	1.25	0.65
£ 0.12.0	0.6.0	0.3.0

## ORDERS TO BE PLACED WITH:

- AUSTRALIA**—CURRENT BOOK DISTRIBUTORS, 695, George Street, Sydney.  
**BELGIUM**—LES AMITIÉS BELGO-SOVIÉTIQUES, Bruxelles.  
**BULGARIA**—KNIGOIZDATELJSTVO NARIZDAT, Bul. Tsar Osvoboditelj 8, Sofia. T. F. Tchipev, Bul. Dondukov 16, Sofia.  
**CANADA**—PROGRESS BOOKS, 95, King Street, Toronto.  
**CUBA**—EDITORIAL PAGINAS, Apartado 2213, Habana.  
**CZECHOSLOVAKIA**—„SVOBODA“, ul. Florenzi 13, Prague 2.  
**DENMARK**—HOVDBANEGAARDENS AVISKIOSK, Reventlowsgade, Copenhagen.  
**FINLAND**—Akateeminen Kirjakauppa, Postilokero 128, Helsinki. Rautatiekirjakauppa, Kõtenpunojankatu 2, Helsinki. Kausankulttuuri Oy Siltasaarenkaty 1. A. 17, Helsinki.  
**FRANCE**—MESSAGERIES FRANÇAISES DE LA PRESSE, III, rue Réaumur, Paris II<sup>e</sup>, „France—URSS“, 29, rue d'Anjou, Paris VIII<sup>e</sup>.  
**GREAT BRITAIN**—COLLET'S BOOKSHOP Ltd., 67, Great Russel Street, London W.C.2.  
**HUNGARY**—„SZIKRA“, Budapest.  
**INDIA**—PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING HOUSE, 190-B, Khetawadi Main Road, Bombay, National Book Agency, 12, Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta.  
**IRAN**—LIBRAIRIE „MEZHDUNARODNAJA KNIGA“, 486, rue Saadi, Téhéran.  
**JUGOSLAVIA**—PUBLISHERS „BORJBA“, Dechanska 31, Belgrad.  
**NORWAY**—Johan Grundt Tanum, Karl Johansgt. 43, Oslo.  
**PALESTINE**—PALES PRESS Co., Ltd., P. O. Box 844, Tel-Aviv.  
**Branches:**  
 PALES PRESS Co., P. O. Box 476, Haifa. PALES PRESS Co., P. O. Box 619, Jerusalem. PALES PRESS Co., Ltd. (Mr. Josef Taragan), 36 Souk Tawile, Beyrouth.  
**POLAND**—„KSIĄŻKA“, Targowa 12, Warszawa. „CZYTELNIK“, Poznańska 38, Warszawa.  
**RUMANIA**—„CARTEA RUSA“, Calea Victoriei 42, Bucarest.  
**SOUTH AFRICA**—PEOPLE'S BOOKSHOP, Pty., Ltd., Trades Hall, Kerk Street, Johannesburg.  
**SWEDEN**—C. E. FRITZE'S Kgl. Hofbuchhandlung Fredsgatan 2, Stockholm.  
**TURKEY**—L. D. BERESINER, Beyogly, Istiklal Caddesi 67, Istanbul.  
**URUGUAY**—EDICIONES PUEBLOS UNIDOS LTDA, Casilla Correo 589, Montevideo.  
**U.S.A.**—FOUR CONTINENT BOOK CORPORATION, 253, Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Universal Distributors, 38, Union Square, New York 3.  
**U.R.S.S.**—„MEZHDUNARODNAJA KNIGA“, 18, Kuznetski Most, Moscow.